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THE TIMES

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50p

Tory chairman looks forward to challenge of life as last colonial ruler

Patten risks political career on Hong Kong

By Robin Oakley, Political Editor

CHRIS Patten, the man who masterminded the Conservative election victory but lost his own seat, is to be the new governor of Hong Kong. He will run the colony until it is handed over to China at the end of June 1997. The job, which Mr Patten described as one of the most challenging in public service, was offered to him on the morning after the election. Yesterday, he said he was honoured to accept.

John Major expressed delight at his friend's decision, adding: "He will have a vital job to do at a crucial time. No one could do it better. It is one of the government's highest priorities to manage the transition to 1997 so as to safeguard Hong Kong's freedom, stability and prosperity."

The appointment will occupy Mr Patten until after the next election, and although he is reminding friends that he will be only 52 when his term of office ends, he accepts that five years away from mainstream domestic politics poses a high risk to his Westminster career.

There had been no consultation with Hong Kong about



Patten prepares for Hong Kong: "This is one of the most important jobs in the public service"

in the next five years and by my commitment to the interests of the people of Hong Kong that I was the right appointment."

He sidestepped questions about whether he had written off his Westminster political career, concentrating instead on his new role. "This is one of the most important jobs in the public service and it is immensely challenging. It involves all safeguarding the interests of the people of Hong Kong. I hope to represent their interests in London and in China."

"When I looked at the scale of the job, when the prime minister and foreign secretary first mentioned it to me, it seemed to me I could not look for anything more challenging for the next five years. I've long admired the Hong Kong success story and I come to the job with a determination first and foremost to uphold the interests of all the people of Hong Kong."

The Chinese embassy in London yesterday sent Mr Patten its congratulations and said: "We hope that Mr Patten will continue to maintain the close co-operation with the Chinese side to ensure the continued prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and the smooth transfer of power in 1997. This is where the common interests of China and Britain lie."

Risks of the job, page 3
Leading article, page 13
Letters, page 13

Hunt on for dark secret of universe

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

THE universe reacted calmly yesterday to news that its ultimate secret had been exposed. Stars twinkled, planets went about their business undisturbed, and the sun shone no more brightly than on any other day for the past few million years. Astronomers, however, went crazy.

Professor Stephen Hawking, of Cambridge University, not usually noted for overstatement, said: "It is the



Hawking: excited by astronomers' findings

discovery of the century, if not of all time". Carlos Frenk, of Durham University, declared it "the most exciting thing that's happened in my life as a cosmologist". More than one astronomer compared the finding to discovery of the Holy Grail.

The physicists and astronomers were saluting a finding that appears to confirm theories of what happened in the earliest moments of the universe. Dr George Smoot, of the University of California at Berkeley, and colleagues announced on Thursday that, with the help of a NASA satellite, they had detected evidence of the first "ripples" of

Continued on page 16, col 7

The Astronomer Royal writes about the origins of the universe, page 12

500 feared lost in ruins of city

Explosions that zig-zagged seven miles through the streets left scenes of devastation reminiscent of the Somme. Martin Fletcher writes from Guadalajara

Scenes of utter devastation in La Reforma suburb of Mexico's second city, Guadalajara, following the series of explosions in its sewage system made the latest official death toll estimates of 186 last night seem impossible. Newspapers put the number of wounded at 1,400 with 1,229 homes and 637 vehicles destroyed. Unofficial reports suggested up to 500 people were still missing.

Like a cartoon trail of dynamite, the sequence of explosions followed the line of a sewer pipe that zig-zagged more than seven miles through the district.

The whole area resembled the Somme after the first world war. Where once there were paved streets lined by shops and homes, there was only a gigantic trench, punctuated by even deeper craters and strewn with rubble, broken pipes, cables and twisted iron. The front of buildings on each side had been blown away. Scores of cars and lorries had been crushed, overturned or literally hurled on to roofs. Lamp-posts were snapped in two, huge half-ton blocks of concrete were caught in the few trees left standing. Palms and telegraph poles were resting at crazy angles.

There were touches of absurdity. A single television aerial stood unscathed on top of a stump of wall. The ferns in two flowerpots had survived while a home was destroyed around them. A single mango on a row of shelves showed that one mound of rubble had once been a shop. Chairs and a table sat untouched on what appeared to be a first-floor balcony. In fact the "balcony" was the very back of what had been a kitchen.

From deep inside one wrecked building a trapped dog yelped and yelped in the darkness, but no one took any notice. Across a city en-

veloped by asphyxiating dust, every manhole cover had been removed to let whatever gas had caused the explosions to escape. Throughout the night, illuminated by temporary floodlights and flashing blue lights, thousands of soldiers, police and volunteers laboured in the rubble with masks across their mouths and noses. From time to time colleagues brought them polythene bags of drinking water.

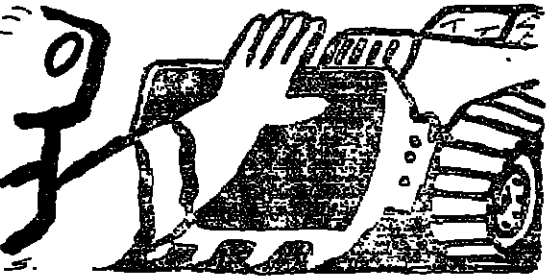
Amid the bulldozers and mechanical diggers, families, allowed back for the first time, sifted through the pathetic rubble of their homes to salvage what they could. One man struggled to open the mishapen drawer of a twisted metal desk. Next door a family had placed their evening's pickings on a single table - a television set, a glass, a pair of jump leads and a china bird. Another family, limping away with a child's bicycle and a carrier bag of possessions topped by a teddy bear, returned to show me their home. The kitchen at the back, where four children had been eating breakfast, was more or less intact. In front of that was a bedroom open to the sky, with the ceiling lying on the bed. In front of that was an empty space which had once been the living room. Like most families in La Reforma, they had no insurance and doubted they would receive any compensation.

These are angry people. Earlier in the week the authorities had been informed of noxious gas odours leaking from the sewers but had failed to act, and they now believe the government is covering up. "It would have been another story if the gas had been found in a rich area," said Enrique Ramirez, a 33-year-old car-

Continued on page 16, col 7

THIS WEEKEND WITH THE TIMES

HOW GREEN WAS MY VALOUR?



Our future may be in their hands: Jonathon Porritt on heroes of the environmental revolution. Weekend Times, page 1

CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS



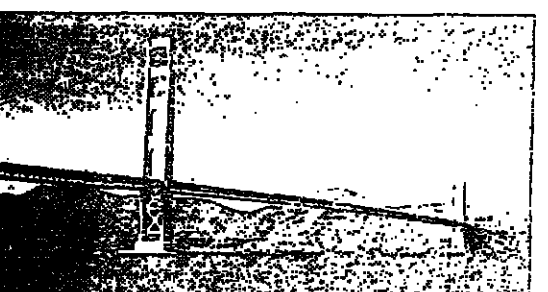
Idolised by millions, Imran Khan and Gary Lineker are major world players both on and off the field. Saturday Review and Pages 31, 32

THE BIG NOISE



Blending melodic pop and sonic overkill, grunge groups like Babes in Toyland are coming over loud if not clear. Weekend Times, page 5

HOW THE WEST IS WON



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Share offer over tunnel

Contractors building the Channel tunnel may receive part payment in shares to avoid Eurotunnel, the developer, having to seek more cash. Talks are taking place between Eurotunnel and the main contracting group, Transmanche Link, to seek a solution to soaring costs and delays. Page 17

Sales winner

Dillons scored a victory in the high street book war when figures showed it had sold twice as many of some titles in the past year as its closest rival. Page 5

Tourist verdict

A coroner recorded a verdict of unlawful killing on Julie Stott, the British tourist shot dead during a street robbery in New Orleans. Page 6

Claim upheld

A woman who was dismissed for having an affair with her boss won her claim for unfair dismissal. Her employers were criticised for being "old-fashioned". Page 2

Tripoli dissent

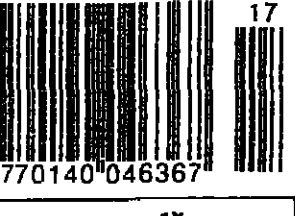
Diplomats reported dissent inside the government of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi and said that public criticism of the regime had become more open. Page 10

Times award

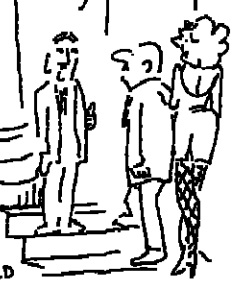
Neil Bennett, banking correspondent of The Times, has won the junior financial journalist of the year award by the Wincon Foundation. He was honoured for general excellence in City reporting, particularly during the BCCI banking collapse. Page 17

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The masonry will collapse if you let her in.



bed

1X

Masons ask women into their 10,000 audience

By Joe Joseph

MAKE friends with a freemason. In their boldest attempt yet to convince doubters that they do not spend their evenings inventing new handshakes or lining each other up with business deals, freemasons are opening their doors for the first time to the media and to invited women guests.

The welcome is part of celebrations to mark the 275th anniversary of the United Grand Lodge of England and the silver jubilee of the Duke of Kent's installation as grand master. It is a chance to make masonry less murky.

"We've been trying for a long time to persuade people we're not futile," Michael Higham, grand secretary, says. "Once in 275 years, we are allowed to let people see what we do." He says that masons have benefited from the new openness: "People no longer regard us as sinister."

More than 10,000 masons from around the world will gather for the celebration in Earls Court stadium, London, on June 10. Mr Higham says that the meeting will enact masonic business, "which we hope will be of some interest to the public."

The crowd would include famous masons, "but it will be up to you to recognise them in the scrum", he says. Prince Michael of Kent and the Duke of Edinburgh are masons. John Major? "I haven't heard that he is. It's up to him to tell you." Mr Higham, a former Royal Navy commander, says that film stars belong and that more young men are attracted to masonry, but he has no news on whether its reach has embraced such young celebrities as Jason Donovan or Nigel Kennedy.

Confounding those outsiders who thought that Mozart was spurned by fellow masons for revealing craft secrets in The Magic Flute, the celebrations will

include a concert at Freemasons Hall in London of excerpts from the opera. "Mozart was a mason, and a good one," Mr Higham says. Although The Magic Flute contains aspects of ritual, "you won't find out much about what goes on in a masonic meeting". As for title-tattle that masons arranged Mozart's early demise for revealing their secrets, Mr Higham says: "That's hokey."

Masonry raises money for charity, but it is largely about "clubbability", he says. "Men like to be together, just like women like to be together. No one thinks the Women's Institute is sinister." But he would not want you to think that it was like those American groups that spend their free time hunting and hugging each other. "Going into the woods at weekends is taking things a little far."

Now that she is no longer required in Tripoli, perhaps the BBC will send Kate Adie to monitor the proceedings.

Woman sacked for affair with boss wins job fight

By A Staff Reporter

A WOMAN dismissed for having an affair with her married boss won her claim yesterday for unfair dismissal after her employers were criticised for being old-fashioned. It was completely unreasonable to cite an office affair carried out discreetly as grounds for dismissal, the west London tribunal said.

Helen Zao, a sales executive at the Richmond offices of the Singapore-owned Times Printers Ltd, was told by the company's vice-president in January last year that her 15-month affair with her boss, Bobby Tan, infringed her contract. This demanded she behave in a "seemly and proper" manner and she was told to resign. Mr Tan's contract contained no such clause.

Ms Zao, a divorcee with two children, refused to leave

and was sacked from her £16,000 a year job the following month. Mr Tan, who earned £50,000 a year, was also forced to hand in his notice.

After the affair was discovered the two were told that



Zao: loss of job "was a complete shock"

their office's performance had been the worst in the company. Ricky Ang, a director of the company, said: "I am sure that your actions have played a part in these performance figures."

David Milton, tribunal chairman, said that the company, which prints *Newsweek* and *The Economist*, had not investigated the matter properly. The panel was not satisfied that the affair was a breach of Ms Zao's contract. Granting her claim for unfair dismissal, Mr Milton said: "This is a problem that a reasonable employer has to deal with on an understanding and fair basis."

He said, however, that Ms Zao, of Isleworth, west London, had failed to prove sexual discrimination or that she was entitled to damages on the basis of equal pay with

her successor, who was on a higher salary. The amount of compensation she is to receive will be decided later.

Mr Milton said that the panel was "unimpressed" by Mr Tan's evidence that while Ms Zao was told to resign or be dismissed, he was given the option of returning to Singapore to stay in work. "It is clear on the evidence that higher management had decided that both these employees were going to be dismissed, come what may," he said.

Ms Zao, whose affair ended shortly after she was dismissed, said that she first heard that her relationship had been discovered when she saw a fax from Singapore which spoke of her resignation. "It was a complete and absolute shock," she told the tribunal. She had been expected to abide by Singaporean culture and resign out of "shame and disgrace". When she refused the company's vice-president, Ronald Pereira, told her: "You are a woman with balls."

"I think that was meant as a compliment," Ms Zao said.

After the case, Ms Zao, who has since set up a printing broking business with Mr Tan, said she was pleased with the tribunal's decision. "I set out first of all to preserve my self-respect. I could not let someone treat me as they did without fighting back. Other employees would have resigned to avoid publicity. I am glad I brought this out into the open."

Pakistani stretches for record

By Peter Victor

A CIVIL servant from Pakistan squeezed into the record books yesterday when he was officially recognised as the world's tallest man, by a quarter of an inch. Mohammad Alam Channa, 39, who is 7ft 6in, is already in *The Guinness Book of Records* for having the biggest feet, at size 22.

Norris McWhirter, publisher of the book, gave Mr Channa a certificate in London after Peter Rowan, medical contributor to the book, took his vital statistics. His hand, at 11in from the heel of the palm to the tip of the middle finger, was adjudged another record.

The previous tallest man, at 8ft 3in, was Parimal Chandra Barman, 27, who died recently in London. Chris Greener, of Kent, who took over the title until yesterday, remains Britain's tallest man, at 7ft 6in. The all-time tallest was Robert Wadlow, who was 8ft 11in.

Mr Channa said that he would use his celebrity status to raise money for a charitable trust he founded for the poor in the region around his home in southeast Pakistan. "I do not mind people staring at me, but there are times when I wish I could blend into the crowd." There is little chance of that. He has already been offered cameo parts in American action films.

Mr Channa has a specially designed house including a 10ft bed. His chauffeur-driven car has had the front passenger seat removed so he can stretch his legs.



Congratulations: tourists meet Mohammad Alam Channa in London

Burghley snuff bottles stolen

PART of a collection of antique Chinese snuff bottles has been stolen from Burghley House, the Elizabethan mansion near Stamford, Lincolnshire. A thief broke a window in a first-floor room, levered the lock off one of three cases containing the bottles, and stole 143 of the 144 in the case.

The total value of the items is not known, but estimates range from £250,000. They were part of a collection assembled by the sixth Marquess of Exeter in the early

1950s. The collection was on show by the windows in the Heaven Room, on the house's main tourist route.

Chinese snuff bottles are greatly sought after by collectors, and the Burghley holding of about 400, made from a variety of precious metals, was renowned. The world record, for a rare Imperial nineteenth century Jadite snuff bottle, is £309,100, paid at Sotheby's, Hong Kong, in 1990.

The Burghley collection is well documented and the bot-

tles will be difficult to sell. It is believed that they were stolen to order.

Lady Victoria Leatham, daughter of the late Lord Burghley, said that she was deeply shaken by the loss, and had taken steps to remove other snuff bottles from the display, and to improve security. Lady Victoria lives at the house with her husband and two children. Direct ownership of the house passed to a charitable trust after Lord Burghley's death in 1981.

Cook urges review of leader contest

By Jill Sherman, Political Correspondent

THE two top campaign teams in the Labour leadership contest called last night for an immediate review of the nomination system for the leader to ensure that more candidates were given a chance.

On Thursday night both John Smith, the front runner, and Bryan Gould suggested that the union block vote for leadership elections should be abolished. Campaign managers for the two contestants argued yesterday that another rule, that all candidates need support from 20 per cent of MPs before they can be nominated, should be changed.

Robin Cook, Mr Smith's campaign manager, said that the rule was intended to stop frivolous challenges, not to stop valid candidates in an open contest. He would be calling for an urgent review at the NEC meeting on Wednesday to keep the present figure when there was an existing leader but to drop the barrier to one tenth of Labour MPs when there was a vacancy — in the leadership contest after this one. David Blunkett, Mr Gould's campaign manager,

wrote to Larry Whitty, Labour party general secretary urging him to review the nomination rules immediately.

Meanwhile a dispute broke out among trade union leaders yesterday after the Labour leadership contenders signalled that they wished to weaken union links with the Labour party. Trade unions are also under pressure to ballot members on the leadership election.

Ken Gill, general secretary of the Manufacturing, Science and Finance union said that it would be "a disaster" to do anything which would exclude the unions but accepted that the weighting given to the union block vote might have to diminish. At the moment trade unions have 40 per cent of the leadership vote.

John Edmonds, GMB leader, said on Radio 4 that the block vote should go with in three years.

Several trade unions will decide in the next few days whether to ballot members over the leadership contest.

Leading article, page 13

Sister on hunger strike

THE sister of the suspected terrorist Joseph "Mad Dog" Magee has been on hunger strike since last week, a court was told yesterday.

Kathleen Magee, 30, of Derby, appeared before Derby magistrates for the second time in relation to a charge of failing to disclose information which could lead to the apprehension of persons wanted for acts of terrorism. She faces a second charge of impeding the arrest of people believed to be involved in the killing of Sergeant Michael Newman, an Army careers officer.

The court was told that Ms Magee had been refusing food since her arrest last week. At one point during her detention in police custody she was taken to hospital for medical checks, the prosecution said.

Magistrates refused bail. Reporting restrictions were not lifted, and she was remanded for seven days.

Workshop sale

The contents of the workshop of Michael Sams, the tool repairer accused of abducting Stephanie Slater, the Birmingham estate agent, will be sold at auction in Newark, Nottinghamshire, today. The items, examined by police hunting the kidnapper, include claw hammers and razor saws. Lawyers will hold the expected £5,000 proceeds pending Sams' divorce settlement.

Charity choice

Richard Fries has been appointed chief charity commissioner by the Home Office. Mr Fries, 51, head of the broadcasting and miscellaneous department at the Home Office and who prepared the white paper on charities which preceded this year's Charities Act, takes over on June 1. He replaces Robin Guthrie, who is to take up a post with the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

VC auctioned

An RAF pilot's Victoria Cross, awarded for bravery during a bombing raid over Germany in the second world war, sold for £57,200 at Christie's in London. Flying Officer Leslie Manser was 20 when he took part in the raid on Cologne involving 1,000 bombers in May 1942. He died when the plane crashed after being hit by flak. He had stayed at the controls to let his crew bail out.

Hughes finds fault with book on Plath

By Alison Roberts

THE Poet Laureate, Ted Hughes, has attacked a book about the poet Sylvia Plath, his first wife, claiming that it will cause their children unnecessary suffering. His comments, in a letter in yesterday's *Times Literary Supplement*, are the latest chapter in the long running dispute between the Plath estate and interpreters of her life and poetry.

Hughes says in his letter that the book *The Haunting of Sylvia Plath* by Jacqueline Rose, professor of English at London University, contains interpretation which distorts and reinvents Plath's "sexual identity" with an abandon I could hardly believe — presenting her in a role that I vividly felt to be humiliating to Sylvia Plath's children.

The offending passage occurs in a reading of *The Rabbit Catcher* in which Professor Rose suggests a note of sexual ambiguity

may be detected in one line of the poem. In the scathing and at times emotional attack on Professor Rose's understanding of the poetry, Hughes says that her interpretation is "fantasy" that would be accepted as damaging fact.

Professor Rose said: "I think it is a very extraordinary letter. I do take offence at his claiming a monopoly on the emotional life. In writing the book I had to have regard not only for the feelings of Ted Hughes, but for the wider readership."

Hughes, who controls Plath's literary estate, and his sister Olwyn Hughes have reacted fiercely to the publication of previous biographies of Plath, who committed suicide in 1963.

Since her death, Plath has become a feminist icon and the Poet Laureate has been much vilified by the women's movement.

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Last



Changing faces: from a barren island



Pol risk

BY ACCEPTING THE nomination of Home Secretary, Mr. [Name] has taken a significant step towards the end of the long and difficult process of the new government's formation. The nomination was made after the most recent round of negotiations with the opposition parties. The new government is expected to take office in the near future. The nomination of Mr. [Name] as Home Secretary is seen as a key move in the government's strategy to address the current political challenges. The new government is expected to focus on economic reform and social issues. The nomination of Mr. [Name] is a reflection of the government's commitment to transparency and accountability. The new government is expected to work closely with the opposition to ensure a smooth transition of power. The nomination of Mr. [Name] is a significant step towards the end of the long and difficult process of the new government's formation. The nomination was made after the most recent round of negotiations with the opposition parties. The new government is expected to take office in the near future. The nomination of Mr. [Name] as Home Secretary is seen as a key move in the government's strategy to address the current political challenges. The new government is expected to focus on economic reform and social issues. The nomination of Mr. [Name] is a reflection of the government's commitment to transparency and accountability. The new government is expected to work closely with the opposition to ensure a smooth transition of power.



An affair of state

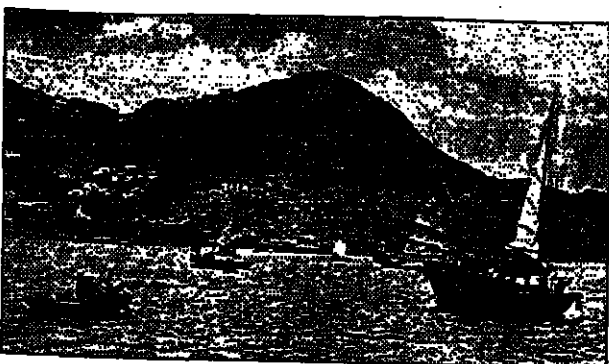
My masters at the GRU must have collected enough material for blackmailing Profum. It only remained to begin the operation which could, we believed, guarantee Moscow an endless flow of secret information from the trapped politician. We believed our agent would have had only talk with Jack about the affair with Christine Keeler to render him co-operative. Profum would never have known for whom he was working. Captain Yevgeny Ivanov from his book *The Naked Spy* — in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow

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Last colonial ruler presides over empire's final flicker



Changing faces: the colony has been transformed from a barren island, above, to a bustling free port

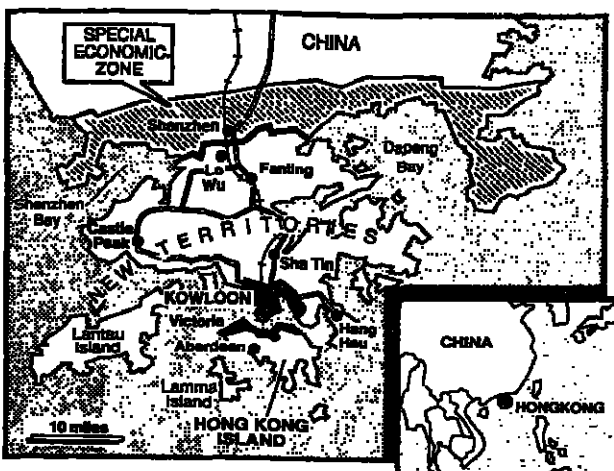


ACQUIRED by the British in 1842, Hong Kong is known as a place of skyscrapers, glamorous hotels, seemingly endless streets, narrow alleys and shopping arcades.

But when the first governor, Sir Henry Pottinger, took up residence in a tent 150 years ago it was a barren island with a population of 5,000. Now the 28th and last governor has two official residences and presides over the final flickers of empire due to be snuffed out in June 1997 when the colony is handed back to the Chinese.

The island of Hong Kong was ceded in perpetuity to the United Kingdom after the First Opium War of 1842 when it was occupied by the British. Under the headline "China: Peace Concluded", *The Times* reported the event in November 1842 with the words: "The island of Hong Kong is ceded for ever to Her Britannic Majesty". Further territory was added in 1860 when the peninsula of Kowloon, opposite the main island, was annexed and in 1898 when Britain demanded and obtained a 99-year lease on the mainland north of Kowloon and the adjoining islands.

Chris Patten faces a momentous task as governor of Hong Kong, Britain's last significant colony, as it nears a turning point in its history, Ray Clancy writes



Hong Kong's magnificent harbour, its free-port status and its potential for trading with the Far East, were the main reasons that the British government was interested in this far-flung outpost. The great trading companies set up their headquarters under the British flag and the commerce grew, with the popula-

tion increasing from 5,000 in 1841 to 500,000 in 1916 to six million now.

The colony's administration followed the usual Crown colony pattern concentrated in the hands of a governor advised by nominated executive and legislative councils on which government officials had a majority over all

others. Key events included the introduction of income and profits taxes for the first time in the 1930s because of a need to increase defence expenditure due to the threat of war.

The colony was occupied by the Japanese in 1941 and found itself in a sorry state at the end of the war. Food was in short supply and rice was rationed. Hotels were requisitioned to cope with the lack of accommodation, and lorries were converted for use as buses. There were changes to the political system, but alterations to the constitution over the next decade were limited.

The colony's population had declined under the Japanese and, at the end of the second world war, power was restored to the British. A big influx of immigrants from China in 1950 led to the frontier being closed.

The postwar period, however, saw the emergence of powerful Chinese elite able to compete with and challenge British merchants and officials in all spheres of public life. Chinese firms came to dominate many aspects of commerce and industry, and Chinese lawyers were appointed to the judiciary.



Pottinger: first took up residence in a tent

In the past 20 years acres of land have been reclaimed from the sea, power stations built and reservoirs constructed with the container port at Kwai Chung becoming the busiest in the world. Two underwater road tunnels now traverse the harbour: the Mass Transit Railway, the Kowloon-Canton Railway and the Light Rail Transit take millions of workers to offices and factories every day. More tunnels have been bored through the hills of Kowloon and high-speed ferries operate to Macau and Guangzhou.

During the 1980s Hong Kong became a giant department store. For the first time shoppers from China were able to acquire foreign goods and absorb new ideas and technologies.

Sir Edward Youde, appointed Governor in 1982, began the negotiations involving the termination of the lease of the New Territories. Margaret Thatcher visited Peking in September 1982 for private talks over the future of the colony. The Chinese government made it clear that the issue was not negotiable.

Secret talks followed and in 1984 the Sino-British Joint Declaration proclaimed that there would be a democratic government to oversee the continuation of Hong Kong's present way of life for the 50 years after 1997. But worries were voiced that the human rights and freedoms guaranteed in the declaration would not be honoured.

With Hong Kong on the brink of a turning point in its history Chris Patten has a momentous task to fulfil. He has to bear in mind the future of British people in the colony and Hong Kong Chinese who fear repression.

Political career at risk on journey east

BY ROBIN OAKLEY, POLITICAL EDITOR

BY ACCEPTING the governorship of Hong Kong, Chris Patten has taken himself out of Westminster politics until after the next election, leading some Tories to wonder if he will return.

He is going without ever having held one of the four great offices of state, although he was a privy councillor, having been environment secretary before he was party chairman. He is leaving what he says is a government led by one of his best friends in politics, practising the kind of Conservatism in which he fervently believes.

Why then go when the prime minister was willing to try to create a by-election vacancy for him or to keep him in the government in the House of Lords? He is going Hong Kong, say friends, because he wanted a real job



to do, because he is "too young for the House of Lords" and because he was deeply committed to the Bath constituency which rejected him at the general election and feels that he cannot simply transfer his emotions to another seat. He did not want to haunt the fringe of politics with people feeling sorry for him.

Mr Patten knows the risks involved in a five year gap. But he hesitated only to make family education arrangements before saying yes to Hong Kong and he is not ruling out a return to the political fray. He will be 52 when the governorship ends with the Chinese takeover in July 1997.

His going will leave a significant gap in Conservative ranks in two ways. He has represented a significant proportion of the intellectual firepower of the Major administration. It was Mr Patten, along with Sarah Hogg, the head of the Downing Street policy unit, who wrote the Tory manifesto.

Even Mrs Thatcher used to have him help to write her speeches and her manifestos despite the deep suspicions which Thatcherites retained about his "wet" instincts. Mr Patten, as the hate figure for the Tory right and the ready-made scapegoat had the election been lost, has diverted some of the flak from the prime minister in the way that Norman Tebbit did for Mrs Thatcher.

Chris Patten resented the "wets" in 1981, reminding Mrs Thatcher, who had dis-

missed him as secretary of the shadow cabinet on succeeding Edward Heath, that loyalty cut both ways. He later admitted that she had been right about the market economy and the pace at which trades union reform could be implemented.

In 1983 she made him a junior minister at the Northern Ireland office. He briefly held a middle rank job at education before becoming minister for overseas development in 1986. In 1989 he became environment secretary and attempted to rescue the poll tax and improve the government's environmental credentials as the Green Party temporarily crested a wave.

In the Tory leadership contest Mr Patten ran the campaign for his old mentor Douglas Hurd, with whom he had served in Northern Ireland and to whom he remains close. There was some surprise when John Major named him to run the party machine.

MPs questioned whether the droll, intellectually fastidious Mr Patten, would prove brutal enough or relish the rough and tumble. But he took to the necessary brutalities of party warfare with some relish.

Although he helped to mastermind his party's victory in the general election, it was at the expense of losing his own seat in Bath.

For a politician who has admitted that he would like to be prime minister, he has taken a significant gamble. The fact that the people of Bath had more say in his appointment than the people of Hong Kong will not make it an easy start.

Patten risks career, page 1
Leading article, page 13



Home comforts: the official residence that Chris Patten will take over as governor of Hong Kong



Cocked hat: Patrick Murphy, of Alan Bennett in Savile Row, adjusting a Wolsely hat of the type Chris Patten will be expected to wear

Rolls-Royce lifestyle for a Morris Minor driver

PERKS and a lavish lifestyle will propel Chris Patten into a round of ceremonial occasions, pomp and circumstance in Hong Kong that are a far cry from his style in his former constituency of Bath, where he got around in an old Morris Minor (Ray Clancy writes).

A Rolls-Royce and two Daimlers are at the disposal of the governor of Hong Kong, supplemented by a 95ft yacht and several helicopters. At £152,000, the governor's tax-free salary is

the highest in the civil service, more than twice that of the prime minister and almost three times what Mr Patten earned as a politician — and that without counting a non-accountable monthly entertainment allowance of £2,800.

But it is not, of course, difficult to spend money in Hong Kong. Half a dozen Dom Perignon Cuban cigars cost £85 at the Davidoff Cigar Boutique, while a bottle of Krug Clos Du Mesnil 1980 is £75 at Remy Nico-

las. The Mandarin Food Shop creates wonderful food sculptures featuring a chocolate grand piano — a snip at £43.

A prolonged absence from Britain, it has been suggested, would almost certainly end Mr Patten's political ambitions. But commentators believe he is young enough at 48 to bounce back after 1997, when Hong Kong reverts to Chi-

na. A guaranteed peerage awaits him in any case.

Mr Patten and his family are expected to base themselves at the governor's official residence overlooking Hong Kong's magnificent skyscrapers. At weekends the family can retreat to the governor's country house in the mountains two miles from the China border.

The governorship has been described as the best job in the world — for those who like Chinese food and do not mind wearing a

cocked hat. Mr Patten will have to get used to wearing the ceremonial plumage, cocked Wolsely hat and all that goes with the job.

The governor's power is impressive. Mr Patten will oversee a centre of world commerce with a population of six million. As commander-in-chief of the armed forces and chancellor of both Hong Kong's universities, he will attend military parades and hand out diplomas. He will also be chief scout.

THE SUNDAY TIMES



An affair of state

My masters at the GRU must have collected enough material for blackmailing Profumo. It only remained to begin the operation, which could, we believed, guarantee Moscow an endless flow of secret information from the trapped politician. We believed our agent would have had only to talk with Jack about his affair with Christine Keeler to render him co-operative. Profumo would never have known for whom he was working...

Captain Yevgeny Ivanov, from his book *The Naked Spy* — in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow

Choice is generally welcomed

FROM JONATHAN BRAUDE IN HONG KONG

HONG KONG reacted philosophically last night to the appointment of Chris Patten, the Conservative party chairman, to be its last colonial governor before it is handed back to Chinese rule on July 1, 1997.

Across the political spectrum, Mr Patten was welcomed as a good choice for the job, although Hong Kong had little input into the decision. However, there was some concern that Mr Patten had no knowledge of Hong Kong or Chinese affairs and would take years to develop the deep understanding of Chinese culture that the territory's diplomat governors have traditionally shown.

Despite the preference among some pro-Peking activists for a Hong Kong Chinese as a symbol of the

Tough job in store for juggler

BY JONATHAN BRAUDE

CHRIS Patten will preside over the return to China of Britain's last oriental possession on June 30, 1997. In his five years in office he will have to guide the territory between the authoritarian demands of China, the economic needs of big business and appeals for a faster pace of democracy from Hong Kong liberals. He will have to juggle the needs of the people of the colony with the competing interests of London and Peking.

Britain's diplomacy was often shown up as amateurish in the face of China's skill at getting its way over Hong Kong. But in Hong Kong many hope that Mr Patten's political instincts will take him on to victory in some of the remaining battles with China, bringing matters of

CONCERN

restoration of Chinese pride and the end of the colonial era, most have come to terms with the reality that Hong Kong has no say in the appointment.

Opinions are coloured by the fact that few here know enough about British political figures of any persuasion to make an educated choice. However, commentators felt Mr Patten would be able to pick up the phone to the prime minister and the foreign secretary and go over the head of the Foreign Office mandarins traditionally associated with appeasement of China. There was a general welcome for the decision to send a political heavyweight with a reputation as a brilliant negotiator.

CONCERN

concern to Hong Kong people to London's attention at the earliest time.

Soon he will have to take decisions on the shape of Hong Kong's electoral system that will ensure an increase in the number of directly elected members of the colony's partly-appointed legislature without offending either the pro-democracy forces lining up behind Martin Lee, chairman of the liberal United Democrats, or the Chinese-influenced business community, which emphasises stability and not offending Peking. By the time of the next general election in 1995 the system must be in place to allow the legislature to continue sitting under Hong Kong's new rulers after 1997.

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Dillons' sales outstrip rivals in book price war

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

DILLONS scored a victory in the high street book war yesterday when new figures showed that it had sold twice as many of some best-selling titles in the past year as its closest rival Waterstone's.

The figures are based on sales of books published by Reed Consumer Books.

Dillons cut the prices of 22 titles and promoted them aggressively on price. Waterstone's discounted 40 titles before Christmas and spent nearly twice as much as Dillons on general advertising but it largely avoided promoting on price the books it had discounted.

Under the Net Book Agreement, which fixes the price of three-quarters of all British books, retailers can neither discount nor promote books on price. Waterstone's reluctantly opted to discount for fear of losing market share to Dillons, a vociferous opponent of the agreement.

Many booksellers and publishers had feared that abolition of the agreement would force booksellers to raise prices on non-discounted titles to recoup losses, as well as harm small independent shops which, they argued, would struggle to compete with the larger chains.

Terry Maher, chairman of the Pentos group which owns

Dillons, said that the figures proved that all booksellers would be better off with the end of price-fixing. "It shows that retailers who discount and promote on price make more money, not less."

Reed books sold to both chains, including re-orders, in the year ending March 31 show that Dillons' strategy paid off. David Lodge's *Paradise News*, discounted by both booksellers but price-promoted only by Dillons, sold 7,824 in Dillons and 3,615 in Waterstone's. Dillons ordered 5,946 copies of Alex Comfort's *The New Joy of Sex* in the year compared with Waterstone's 3,253.

In the case of Hugh Johnson's *Pocket Wine Guide*, the difference was even more pronounced, with Dillons ordering 14,089 and Waterstone's 4,827. The year before, Dillons sold only 4,000 of the book and Waterstone's about 4,200. Dillons, meanwhile, sold 4,434 copies of the Michael Shelden biography *George Orwell* compared to Waterstone's 1,974.

There were only two exceptions to Reed's list of 20 books. Waterstone's sold more copies (3,562) of Roddy Doyle's *The Van*, which was heavily promoted as a Booker shortlist title, than Dillons (3,181). Janet and Allen Ahlberg's children's book *The Jolly Christmas Postman* also did better at Waterstone's, which ordered 17,337 compared to 12,346 from Dillons.

Silence of the Lambs, discounted by neither chain, also did better in Waterstone's (28,599) than at Dillons (23,286).

But Tim Waterstone, who founded Waterstone's ten years ago, said the Reed figures were "irrelevant", as they did not show how much stock at either chain had gone unsold. Both chains denied, however, that they were overstocked.

Richard Charkin, chief executive of Reed Consumer Books, said: "Even if both are slightly overstocked, and I suspect they are, it would not mean much with these figures. Books are ordered in small amounts and they wouldn't be reordering if they were overstocked enough to counter our sales figures."

He said: "There is no doubt whatsoever that the combination of discounting and promotion has substantially increased the sales of the titles in the various campaigns. Our experience is that none of these additional sales have taken away sales from other outlets and our business with small independent booksellers has never been stronger."

But Sidney Davis, trade practice executive at the Booksellers Association, said: "All it shows that if you promote heavily and spend a lot of money on advertising you can sell more books."

Pope and prince 'in accord'

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE Prince of Wales and the Pope stand together on many issues surrounding poverty and population, a Roman Catholic bishop said yesterday.

The Rt Rev Vincent Nichols, bishop in north London, said that Third World countries were easy targets when looking for someone to blame for the prospect of a world population doubled by the year 2050.

Earlier this week, the prince criticised those, led by the Vatican, that have blocked attempts to have population treated as a separate issue at the "Earth Summit" conference in Rio de Janeiro.

Bishop Nichols defended his church's family planning policy. "I think it is abhorrent to impose upon people programmes of birth control."

Ged Clapson, of the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development, said: "We agree with a great deal of what Prince Charles said. Our policy is that population cannot be looked at in isolation. The cause of population growth is poverty. We do address the question of family planning but through natural means."

Octopus proves it is not a sucker

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

ANYONE despairing of teaching an old dog new tricks might be well advised to buy an octopus.

Researchers have found that the marine animals can learn tricks from humans and from each other, contradicting the widely-held belief that invertebrates, creatures without backbones, are incapable of such learning.

The researchers found in a study that octopuses learned the tricks most quickly when taught by another octopus that had been trained. This was a particular surprise, because the animals are viewed by zoologists as being of the James Dean school of sociability. Indeed, their reputation as loners is so great that specimens are often kept in separate tanks to stop them coming to blows or eating one another.

The study has been made by Graziano Fiorito and Pietro Scoto, of the Naples Zoological Station's neurobiology laboratory and the University of Reggio Calabria, using common octopuses, *Octopus vulgaris*, caught in the Bay of Naples.

The researchers, whose findings were published yesterday in the journal *Science*, taught some how to choose the correct ball from a red and white one hung

above the aquarium on nylon sticks. The correct ball was different for each of the invertebrate students.

To see whether the creatures could learn, fish was used as a reward for picking the right ball, and a mild electric shock was given as punishment for picking the wrong one.

After between 16 and 21 tries, the octopuses could work out which ball they were supposed to choose. However, if an untrained octopus watched a trained one, it needed only four tries to choose correctly.

The researchers found that the learning appeared to sink in, with animals retaining the lesson for up to five days.

Martin Wells, reader in zoology at the University of Cambridge, said that the finding appeared to be that the animals could learn from one another. Other invertebrates might be found to possess learning skills.

"Learning from other animals by watching what they do is somewhat of an uncommon occurrence, but possibly because people have not looked for it," Dr Wells said.

He cited the case of bees, on which there has been much research, where one learned the route to food from another's dance.



Horse tales: Desert Orchid, the racehorse, and Jim Stone, chief travelling lad, outside Harrods at the launch of *The Grey Horse - The True Story of Desert Orchid*, by Richard Burridge, his principal owner

BA sued by crew who saved pilot

By DAVID YOUNG

CABIN crew members who prevented a pilot from being sucked out of a cockpit when its windscreen blew out at 17,000ft are claiming damages for trauma and negligence against British Airways. The pilot, Captain Tim Lancaster, is considering legal action.

Nigel Ogden, a steward on the BAC 1-11 aircraft which was carrying 81 passengers, said that the claim had been lodged through solicitors. "But we are prepared to take the matter through the courts if we don't get a satisfactory answer." The proceedings, with medical reports, would be put formally to BA in May.

BA confirmed that four of the six cabin crew had lodged damages claims. A spokesman said: "After the accident members of the crew were offered a free holiday, one involved a round-the-world trip and another a £10,000 honeymoon. All were given substantial amounts of paid leave and compensation for loss of earnings way beyond the legal requirement."

Captain Lancaster was saved by the crew members who hung on to his legs after he was dragged half out of the cockpit when the windscreen

blew out 20 minutes into the flight. The co-pilot landed the aircraft, which was en route to Spain from Birmingham.

BA's maintenance procedures were criticised in the official report into the incident. The report, by the Air Accidents Investigation Branch, found that a fitter had used the wrong bolts to secure the windscreen. The windscreen-fitting process, 27 hours before the flight in June 1990, was "characterised by a series of poor work practices, poor judgments and perceptual errors", the report said. The Civil Aviation Authority had failed adequately to monitor BA's maintenance procedures, it added.

Captain Lancaster's wife Margaret said: "Obviously he is considering taking legal action but I don't want to say anything more at this stage."

Mr Ogden, of Solihull, Birmingham, John Heward, purser, 39, Simon Rogers, steward, 30, of Solihull, and Sue Gibbins, stewardess, 32, of Solihull, are said to have been diagnosed as suffering from post-trauma stress and only Mr Heward is still flying. The others are off work with nervous complaints.

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Tourist's killing was brutal and senseless

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A CORONER recorded a verdict of unlawful killing yesterday on Julie Stott, the British tourist shot dead during a street robbery in New Orleans last week. Bryan North, the North Manchester coroner, told a hearing in Rochdale, Greater Manchester, that the murder was a "wanton, brutal and senseless act".

Miss Stott, 27, of Eccles, Greater Manchester, was on holiday with her boyfriend, Peter Ellis, when she was shot by a robber after leaving a restaurant in the French



Julie Stott: shot after leaving a restaurant

quarter of the city. Mr North said that a report from a medical centre in New Orleans where Miss Stott died a few hours after the shooting showed that a 22 calibre bullet had lodged in her skull. She had also been shot in the right forearm. The inquest was told that her organs had been donated for transplant.

A youth has been charged with her murder and with the attempted murder of Mr Ellis. Three other youths have been accused of being accessories to the crime.

Miss Stott's parents, Ray, 60, and Margaret, 55, of Middleton, Manchester, were told by Mr North that they had his sympathy on what he called a dreadful occasion. He said: "This was a wanton, brutal and senseless act which deprived them of a beloved daughter, the community of a talented young woman and her fiancé of a loving future partner." The family believed that the couple were to become engaged during the holiday.

Mr Stott told the hearing that he had last seen his daughter, a textile designer with a firm in Bolton, when

he took her to the airport at the start of her holiday, a week before the shooting. She met up with Mr Ellis, who had travelled from New Zealand, where he had been working, in the United States.

Mr Stott said that Mr Ellis had telephoned him from his hotel room to say that Miss Stott had been shot. He was later told by the hospital that she had died. Medical evidence read to the hearing said that a bullet had entered the right side of her head, nine centimetres above the ear. Mr Ellis did not attend the inquest.

The coroner said that a New Orleans police report recorded that the couple were confronted by "a lone gunman who demanded they lie on the ground. When they did not comply instantly, the attacker shot at and missed Mr Ellis. He then fired at Miss Stott at least twice, striking her in the right forearm and right temple. Treatment proved fruitless and Miss Stott died a few hours later as a result of a gunshot wound."

Miss Stott's parents left the hearing without commenting.



In the frame: judges voting on a contender for the BP portrait award at the National Portrait Gallery, London. The competition is open to artists aged 18 to 40 and the winner will be announced on June 4. First prize is £10,000, plus a £2,000 commission at the judges' discretion. The runner-up wins £4,000

Body of baby girl found in river

A body of a baby found yesterday in the river Nidd near Harrogate, North Yorkshire, has been identified by her father as Tara Calnan, aged five months, who had been missing since April 13.

Tara's body was recovered by police after it was seen by a man walking his dog along the river between Killinghall and Knaresborough. A post-mortem examination has been carried out. A team of frogmen had been trawling a six-mile section of the river since the girl went missing.

Tara's mother, Maxine Davies, 29, of East Shilton, Leicestershire, was remanded in custody by Harrogate magistrates on Thursday accused of attempting to cause grievous bodily harm to her daughter. She will appear in court again next Thursday.

Obscene discs

Vinson Pike, 22, of Moreton, Wiltshire, was fined £1,000 by Swindon magistrates after admitting four charges of advertising pornographic floppy discs for sale. The prosecution, under the Obscene Publications Act 1964, is believed to be the first in connection with computer-stored material.

Hoax sentence

A bus driver who made a hoax bomb threat to his girl friend's workplace after she jilted him was given 150 hours' community service and told to pay £240 costs by Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court, Staffordshire. Alan Jones, 35, of Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, admitted making the call to the warehouse.

Mouse in can

Haywoods Foods, of Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, has been fined £1,500 after a woman in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, found part of a mouse's head inside a can of bean salad. The firm had denied producing a tin containing a rodent.

Freddie safe

Freddie the dolphin has been sighted, playing alongside fishing boats off the north pier off Sunderland, Tyne & Wear, allaying fears that he had been drowned in fishing nets.

Nature gift

Dow Chemicals, of King's Lynn, Norfolk, has given £12,000 to create special ponds on Roydon Common, six miles away, to attract damselflies and dragonflies.

Spirits flow

The Rev Colin Judd, vicar of St Columba's church, Great Horton, Bradford, is to be allowed to serve alcohol with meals at a restaurant opened in the building last year to boost church funds.

Hospital charities shunned

BY KERRY GILL

CHARITABLE fund-raising stunts for hospitals should be boycotted because they enable the government to reduce its spending on the health service, the Scottish TUC annual conference said yesterday.

Anne Middleton, health service organiser in Scotland for NALGO, the local government union, said it was obscene that sick people should have to depend on charity. Delegates backed her call for unions to explain why charity undermined the health service and to demand that health boards should stop encouraging charity events because they disguised government under-funding.

Ms Middleton said: "We must give a clear message to the rabbits and furry bears, to the bed-pushers and the lunatics who abseil down buildings. By collecting money for health charities, you are no friend of the NHS. Put your energies to better use by campaigning for a properly funded health service."

Hospitals' dependence on charity events was a relic of an earlier age, such as relying on "flag days". Even sick children were used to promote campaigns. Charities were distorting medical priorities by exploiting people's emotions about sick children or high-technology.

Short on verge of historic chess win

BY RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

NIGEL Short resumes play today in his world chess championship semi-final with the knowledge that if he wins he will become the first Briton to reach the final stage of the world qualifying competition.

Short, 26, of West Hampstead, northwest London, started his challenge two weeks ago, in Linares, Spain, against the formidable Russian, Anatoly Karpov. The Russian held the world title from 1975 to 1985 and has accumulated more first prizes in international tournaments than any other grandmaster or champion.

Few commentators gave Short a chance before the match, with *The Times* being a rare exception. Pessimistic forecasts appeared to be confirmed when Karpov won the first game. One down, Short struggled to draw the second game, although he had the advantage of the white pieces.

From that point on, he underwent a sea change. Short did not win game three, but he came close, and the 12-hour draw took its toll of Karpov's stamina and nerves. The breakthrough came with a Short win in game four, repeated in game six after a drawn fifth game. In the sixth, a tired Karpov blundered away his queen and suffered one of the briefest and most humiliating setbacks of his career.

The former champion summoned up his reserves of energy and determination to draw level with a win in game seven, but then came the momentous eighth game. Rarely

has a player risen to such heights of power and artistry as Short displayed in this battle. A feat to the queen's side lured Karpov's pieces on to exposed and dislocated squares. Then came the true point of Short's strategy. In a flash, his forces were pointing directly at the black king and Karpov's fortifications were reduced to rubble. On the 36th move, the ex-champion extended his hand in a forlorn gesture of defeat.

Short leads the ten-game match by 4½ points to 3½. Although he starts this afternoon with the disadvantage of the black pieces, he will be ready to pounce if Karpov shows the slightest sign of over-reaching in his quest for the win he needs to keep him in the match.

If Short wins this afternoon, he will qualify for the final, in which he will meet either Jan Timman, of Holland, or Arsen Yusupov, a Russian now playing for Germany. At the end of the road lies the prestige and the \$3 million prize fund of a world title challenge against Gary Kasparov in Los Angeles next year.

If Short arrives in Los Angeles as the challenger, he will have completed a global round-trip of qualifying events. First, in 1990, he won a massed tournament of grandmasters in Manila. Then, last year, he beat Jon Speelman in London on the final game of the match. In the quarter-final, held in Brussels last summer, he swept away the strong Russian grandmaster Boris Gelfand.

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Tories scramble to retain Speaker's robes

Betty Boothroyd looks home and dry, but Conservatives will spend the weekend searching frantically for a Tory to fill the Speaker's chair. Jill Sherman reports on the battle and profiles the contenders

THE scramble to find a strong Tory candidate to challenge the Labour MP Betty Boothroyd, the favourite for the Speakership of the House of Commons, is likely to continue at least until Monday afternoon.

Government whips and senior backbenchers have been frantically trying to drum up support for one of the four Tory candidates still running for the Speaker's job and canvassing is likely to go on throughout the weekend.

Miss Boothroyd, with support from both sides of the House, is widely expected to win the first serious contest for the post for 40 years. However, Tory MPs yesterday claimed growing support for Sir Giles Shaw, MP for Pudsey, and Terence Higgins, chairman of the Treasury and civil service select committee, with Paul Channon considered a compromise candidate. There is little support for Peter Brooke, former Ulster secretary.

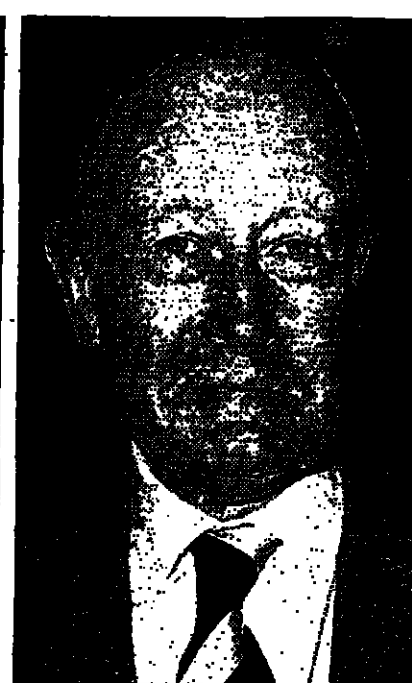
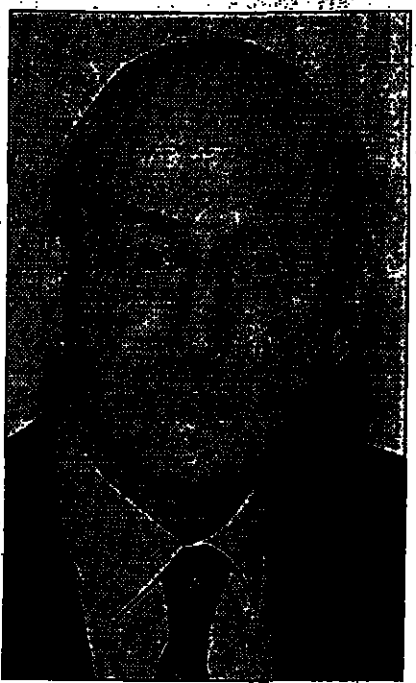
Several Tory backbenchers voiced alarm privately at the

party's failure to back one candidate. Despite moves by some campaign leaders to seek a consensus candidate, this seemed unlikely yesterday with the four still claiming they would bid for the job.

John Major has made clear that MPs must decide rather than a candidate being imposed on the House, although Downing street sources have indicated that given a Conservative majority Mr Major would expect a Tory Speaker.

Sir Edward Heath, who as father of the house will preside over the selection, or election of the new Speaker on Monday, hinted at his personal view yesterday when he warned the government not to spend too much time throwing mud at the opposition.

Sir Edward refused to comment directly on the contest but said: "The Labour party has got a new intake, and from what we have seen of them they are very competent. They will also have the inducement to stretch us as far as they possibly can." Labour leaders expect the Conser-



Standing to sit in the chair: from left, Terence Higgins, Betty Boothroyd and Sir Giles Shaw

vatives to come up with one candidate by Monday who would only be put up to challenge Miss Boothroyd if he had a good chance of winning. If it is judged that no one can bear her the Tories may decide to allow her to be elected without a fight.

The alternative is a prolonged contest, chaired by Sir Edward. If there were more

than one candidate, he would call for one of them to be proposed on a motion. After the merits of that candidate had been discussed there would be an amendment putting forward the name of a second candidate. After a debate there would be a vote. If the amendment was carried that candidate would be Speaker. If it failed there

would be another amendment naming another candidate. The procedure would continue until one of the candidates was successful. If all the amendments failed the original motion would be put to the vote. If passed that candidate would be Speaker. For more than 40 years soundings on both sides of the Commons have produced

an agreed candidate. In 1951 W.S. Morrison, Conservative MP for Cirencester and Tewkesbury, defeated Major J. Milner, Labour MP for Leeds South East, who had been deputy Speaker in the previous parliament. The last contested election before that was in 1895.

Diary, page 12

Rhondda digs for gold in history

BY NICHOLAS WATT

THE Rhondda Valley, which once rang to the sound of thousands of pit boots, is turning to tourism to boost its sagging economy. The valley's own tourist board was launched yesterday with a brochure advertising attractions such as a coal tip, called Old Smokey, and the site of the 1910 Tonypandy riot.

The board hopes to entice visitors attending Britain's fifth national garden festival, which opens at Ebbw Vale next Friday. The main attraction is a heritage trail linking 21 sites that tell the valley's colourful story.

The Rhondda was once the centre of Wales's great coal industry, which, in its heyday, employed more than 250,000 people. The valley's 60 main pits have now all closed, with just scarred hillsides as grim reminders of the past.

This history is encapsulated in the Rhondda Heritage Park, built into an old colliery at Lewis Merthyr, where the last "stay down" strike in Britain took place, in 1983. The park recreates life in the pit. The most poignant monument

to the valley's past is at Maendy, a village known in the 1930s as "Little Moscow". There, is a piece of coal cut on the final shift before the last pit in the Rhondda closed, in December 1990.

The board should not lack tourists, who spend an estimated £1.4 billion a year in Wales. The Wales Tourist Board launched a five-year development programme in 1989 to attract investment of £73 million. About 95,000 people, nearly 10 per cent of the workforce, work in the tourist trade.

Viscount Tonypandy, the valley's best-known son, who as George Thomas was Speaker of the Commons from 1976 to 1983, said: "Tomorrow's Rhondda will be great. This marvellous valley will go from strength to strength."

Paul Loveluck, chief executive of the Wales Tourist Board, said: "Five years ago, when it was mooted that tourism would take place in the South Wales valleys, some people laughed. Today, they are having to laugh on the other side of their face."

Boothroyd remains favourite



BETTY Boothroyd, the former Tiller girl, looks likely to become the first Madam Speaker unless the Tories decide at the last minute to put their full backing behind one candidate.

Peter Brooke, above, the former Tory party chairman, is now considered the least likely Tory candidate to win, and he and his friends have spent little effort promoting his cause. Peter Bottomley, said to be his campaign manager, is abroad this weekend.

Mr Brooke, Northern Ireland secretary until the general election, is well liked and respected, but most backbenchers frown on the idea of someone coming straight from a government post to take up the Speaker's position. Mr Brooke, 58, MP for City of London and Westminster South, was tipped as the early front runner, but the government whips seemed to have discounted him yesterday.

His dependable discretion suffered a slight dent when he sang on a television chat show in Ireland earlier this year, only hours after a bomb killed eight men in Northern Ireland.

Miss Boothroyd, a deputy speaker and Labour MP for West Bromwich, has been the front runner for more than a week in spite of efforts by government whips to find a convincing candidate from the Conservative party.

Tipped for some time to be Bernard Weatherill's successor, Miss Boothroyd has the charisma, enthusiasm and sense of fun which her Tory opponents lack. Her no-nonsense approach and uncompromising right-wing stance in the party have won her several supporters among Tory backbenchers and it was thought that she might stand unopposed.

Downing Street sources have, however, said that the prime minister would prefer a Conservative Speaker so Miss Boothroyd is expected to force the first serious contest and vote for the post for nearly 40 years. She has been a deputy speaker since 1987.

Higgins vies for chair

TERENCE Higgins, an experienced and highly respected backbencher of 28 years' standing, is considered to be one of the top two Tory candidates. Mr Higgins, 64, has chaired the liaison committee that co-ordinates the work of parliamentary select committees, as well as the Treasury and civil service select committee, for most of the past two parliaments.

An independent-minded elder statesman with liberal social views, Mr Higgins is regarded by some colleagues

as too priggish and earnest to be at ease controlling a rowdy House of Commons.

Although Mr Higgins, MP for Worthing, is well liked he has never developed a high profile in the Commons. Made a Treasury minister of state in 1970, he moved to financial secretary to the Treasury in 1972. In opposition he was spokesman on Treasury and economic affairs and later on trade. He was too independent and too liberal socially to win office under Margaret Thatcher.

Shaw the strongest rival



SIR Giles Shaw is expected to receive the widest backing from Tory MPs, although he still may not get sufficient support to be an effective challenger to Betty Boothroyd.

Sir Giles, MP for Pudsey, West Yorkshire, is well liked in the Commons. He has held junior ministerial posts ranging from under-secretary of state in the Northern Ireland office in 1979 to minister of state at the trade department in 1986. Considered a safe pair of hands, Sir Giles is well respected as a shrewd, detached, consensus seeker.

Sir Giles, 61, is an affable pragmatist and, according to friends, would be the Tory most acceptable to Labour in the event of Miss Boothroyd not getting the post. Tory sources have suggested that Sir Giles was well supported in a trawl of Tory MPs conducted before the election.

Touted as the classless candidate, partly due to his Yorkshire roots, he has been criticised only on one point—his height. His petite daughter Henrietta once coxed for Cambridge, but the diminutive Sir Giles could also have fitted the bill.

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Bonn's 5% pay rise ceiling under fire

German public-sector strike gathers pace

FROM IAN MURRAY IN BONN

MOTORWAY maintenance men at the Cologne west crossroads downed picks and shovels yesterday morning to become the first of Germany's 2.3 million public employees to go on strike in 18 years. Shortly afterwards the 1,600 sorters in one of Hamburg's big post offices were called out indefinitely as their union announced that 95.4 per cent of members had voted to back industrial action in support of a pay claim.

The full returns on the ballot of all public-service employees are due to be released today but the post-office section's response shows that the result is a foregone conclusion. The public has been warned not to post letters because they are unlikely to be collected. The prospect now is for unemptied dustbins, unrepaired motorways, unintended kindergartens and unmaned savings banks.

The stage is set for a conflict which would have seemed impossible a couple of years ago, with traditionally moderate unions and management using the kind of militant language that Britain used to specialise in. As militancy rises at the pace of inflation, the government's hopes of seeing this year's wage settlements average no more than 5 per cent seem increasingly remote.

The difference between the current offer of 4.8 per cent to the public sector and the arbi-

tration award of 5.4 per cent is worth only around 20 marks (£7) a month to each worker. However, during weeks of increasingly acrimonious argument in the official cooling-off period, there was no sign that either side was ready to compromise.

Unions in the key engineering and building sectors have served warning that they too are ready to take industrial action in support of more pay. An offer yesterday worth just 3.3 per cent in response to engineering workers' claims for more than 9 per cent was dismissed as "socially provocative" by Franz Steinkühler, their union leader. He threatened warning strikes from next Tuesday when the formal cooling-off period is over.

At the start of the building sector negotiations yesterday employers offered 3.4 per cent against union claims for 9.8 per cent and extra holidays.

The workers' leaders described the offer as ludicrous. Trying to encourage fellow citizens to tighten belts, Helmut Kohl, the chancellor, returns from his annual springing cure next Tuesday and has promised to take a voluntary 5 per cent cut in his 348,317 marks (£120,000) salary. He is asking his cabinet ministers, who each earn 298,651 marks, to make a similar sacrifice. To workers earning on average 38,400 marks (£13,150) a year, and with inflation climbing to-

wards 5 per cent, such a cut seems an empty gesture.

The chancellor, aware that the International Monetary Fund is blaming his country for undermining world economic recovery by maintaining high interest rates, seems equally determined to dig in. His Christian Democrat-led government is at one with Social Democrat-led local authorities in resisting the union demands. The only way to satisfy them would be to increase revenue or borrowing and the chancellor has promised that he will not raise taxes. He made — and broke — a similar promise 18 months ago, and that has contributed to his party's loss of three state elections since.

The independent Bundesbank, which controls interest rates, is also twisting Herr Kohl's arm. If he surrenders to the public-service union the bank is prepared to push rates even higher.

Bouncing back, page 18



Private enterprise: George Lancelin of France beside the Soviet space capsule he bought at a Paris auction yesterday for 1 million francs (about £100,000)

Andreotti quits as Speakers elected

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

GIULIO Andreotti, the Italian prime minister, resigned yesterday after both houses of the country's fragmented new parliament at last elected Speakers.

His decision to quit came in the wake of the severe setback suffered by his coalition of Christian Democrats, Socialists, Social Democrats and Liberals in the general election on April 5 and 6. He will remain in office as a caretaker for the time being.

After five inconclusive votes the Chamber of Deputies chose Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, 73, a Christian Democrat, as Speaker. The Senate re-elected Giovanni Spadolini.

The Christian Democrats ensured Signor Scalfaro's election by enlisting the support of deputies from the Greens, the new Sicilian anti-Mafia party, Rete (network), and the Radical party. Commentators said it was likely these groups would be approached to join a widened version of the outgoing coalition.

Signor Scalfaro's election enraged President Cossiga, who threatened to resign today over what he saw as a personal insult by the Chris-

tian Democrats. He and Signor Scalfaro are arch rivals.

However, Signor Cossiga has repeatedly threatened to resign in recent weeks and there was speculation that he might be persuaded to remain in office to begin formal talks with party leaders to find a new prime minister-designate able to put together a new government to introduce much needed political, institutional and economic reforms.

● Planes inadequate: As officials in Rome nervously watched the impact on Libya of United Nations sanctions, the commander of the Italian Air Force has said that his men would be incapable of responding effectively to a Libyan attack because their fighters are superannuated and lack anti-aircraft support (John Phillips writes).

"At this moment we do not have air defence," General Scilio Nardini, the air force chief of staff, said during a speech at a missile testing base in Perdasdefogu, Sardinia, yesterday. He urged parliament quickly to endorse a modernisation plan drawn up by the outgoing government.

Austria seeks a new image of acceptability

With the embarrassing Waldheim era drawing to a close, the race is on for the hot seat in the Hofburg, Anne McElvoy writes from Vienna

Kurt Waldheim's lonely presidency of Austria ends tomorrow as the country elects a new and less troublesome figurehead in the Hofburg Palace.

With his departure the country will embark on a new era of international acceptability. Quite what it wants to do now that it is again acceptable at the bar of world opinion, it has yet to decide. The country, once memorably described as an "apotheosis of unreality" and devoted to keeping out of the distasteful business of world affairs, faces pressing decisions about the future of its neutral status, membership of the European Community and the future shape of its internal politics, whose cosy consensus is threatened by what appears to be an irresistible rise of the extreme right.

The politician expected to win is Rudolf Streicher, a



Waldheim: presidency ends tomorrow

Social Democrat and former transport minister, who is cast firmly in the required mould of respectable stolidity. The conservative People's party is fielding Thomas Klestil, a former ambassador to America, who has campaigned on securing "Austria's deserved place in the world". The far-right Freedom party and the Greens make up the field. With no one expected to achieve an absolute majority, a run-off between Herr Streicher and Herr Klestil is expected next month.

Few will mourn President Waldheim. It was, despite all the shows of loyalty which the global attacks on him produced, a shade embarrassing even for the inward-looking Austrians to be represented by a man spurned by so many countries that he had to boast about being received in Iran and Liechtenstein. He

never escaped the shadow of allegations during his 1986 election campaign that he had sent civilians and prisoners of war to their deaths while serving as an intelligence officer in the Nazi Wehrmacht.

After a thorough investigation into his past by the specially-appointed historians' commission, no proof was produced that he had been personally responsible for the prisoners' deaths. But there was ample evidence that he had sought to conceal — and even lied about — his past as he climbed through the ranks of the United Nations to the position of secretary-general before thrusting for the job of president at home.

The Waldheim scandal exposed an unpleasant side of the country: its anti-semitic undertones and tendency to indulge in collective amnesia. The most regrettable aspect of the affair was that it resulted not in a more exacting examination of the past, but in its citizens closing ranks resentfully against the rest of the world.

The Third Reich continues to sit like an undigested lump in the body politic of Austria. An agreement between the four candidates for the presidency to pursue a quiet campaign was shattered when Herr Jörg Haider, the leader of the far-right Freedom party, accused Robert Jungl, the elderly Jewish Green party candidate, of having written a pamphlet praising Hitler's racial policies during his Swiss exile.

The smear was based on a quote taken out of context, a tactic calculated to hit back at the critics of Herr Haider's party who criticise the nods that the Freedom party frequently makes in the direction of neo-Nazi voters. The party's candidate for the Hofburg is Heide Schmidt, a steely-eyed, attractive lawyer, who represents the civilised wing of the party. She is not expected to get more than 15 per cent of the vote tomorrow, having incurred the wrath of Herr Haider for complaining at the use of racist phrases by one of his staff.

However, her candidacy serves to keep the Freedom party in the forefront of Austrian politics and helps Herr Haider to continue driving a wedge between the parties of the grand coalition, which he intends to shatter.

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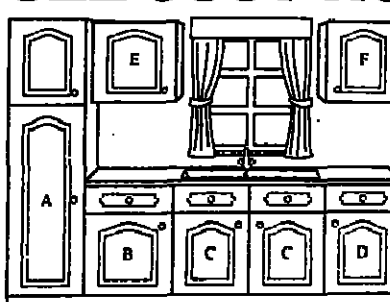
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March exposes frailty of Walesa's power

AS 70,000 workers marched on President Walesa's palace in Warsaw yesterday, an organisation stood up and through a megaphone read an open letter from the Polish leader. It expressed understanding, urged patience for market reform and appealed to common Solidarity roots. The letter was signed not only by the president, but also by Mieczyslaw Wachowski, his former chauffeur and *émigré* grise.

When Mr Wachowski's name was read out the crowd howled with disdain. Mr Wachowski, 42, a taxi driver who once worked illegally as a mechanic in London, is regarded as a secret vice-president whose presence shows the frailty of Mr Walesa's power.

The march was in protest against the budget cuts of Jan Olszewski, the prime minister. The protesters whistled and jeered at him and shouted: "Next time it will be a general strike." The effect of the demonstration, though, was to show that neither the president nor the prime minister has control of the crowd.

A similar problem of control confronts President Havel of Czechoslovakia. His

Economic reforms in Warsaw and Prague are being hampered by their presidents' lack of clout, Roger Boyes, East Europe Correspondent, writes

advisers are also mocked, and the Slovaks in particular believe that Karl von Schwarzenberg, the Bohemian aristocrat, holds too much sway. Mr Havel has been persistently rebuffed by parliament in his attempts to broaden his constitutional authority. He can only call a general election if the budget is rejected by parliament, he cannot declare a state of emergency and would be reduced to the role of spectator if the Slovaks were to divorce the Czechs. Sensing that the June parliamentary elections could produce a chaotic mix of parties, Mr Havel has signalled his intention to stand again as president to stay on as a symbol of a united federation.

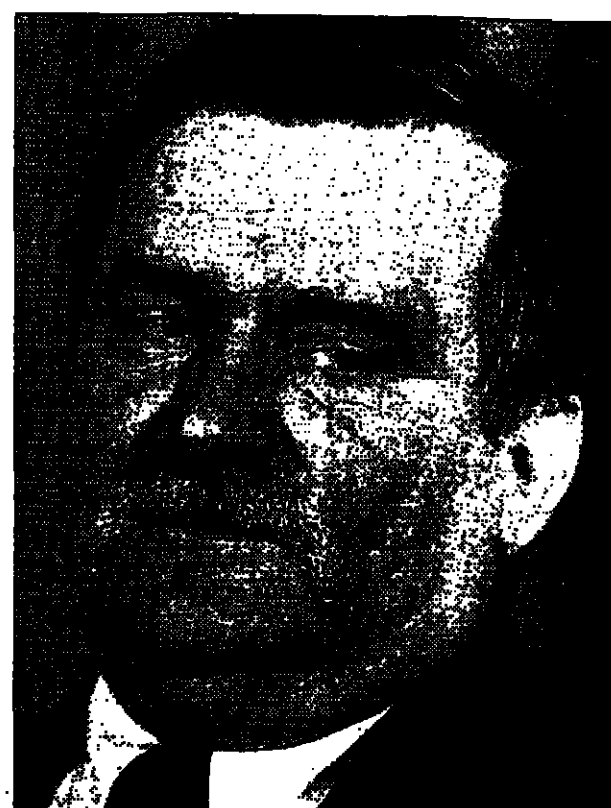
Mr Walesa has still not come to terms with the limits of his power. He has more constitutional clout than Mr Havel. He can declare martial law, nominate the prime minister and, technically at

least, guide both foreign and defence policy. But without a political party of his own, he like Mr Havel, is largely confined to the sidelines.

Through his trusted adviser Mr Wachowski, the president has been trying to expand his power. It was Mr Wachowski who started to talk quietly to Polish generals, prompting public accusations that the president was preparing the ground for a benign coup.

If the present government were to stumble, one option would be a cabinet steered by Mr Walesa. To make this work he needs the support of the people. Mr Havel, too, has tried to appeal above the heads of parliament directly to the citizens for a populist mandate. He failed. Judging by opinion polls and by the mood of the crowd yesterday, Mr Walesa can no longer reckon on posing as a revolutionary tribune.

The full venom of the political



On the sidelines: Presidents Havel of Czechoslovakia, left, and Walesa of Poland do not lead their own parties. As a result, they lack the power to control the public and use advisers who are publicly mocked

class has now been turned on Mr Walesa and Mr Wachowski. Arkadiusz Rybicki, who is a former head of staff in the presidential palace, was quoted as saying this week: "Since he could hardly cope with the difficulties, Walesa retired into his

shell, adopted a wait-and-see attitude and surrounded himself with admirers. He has isolated himself from true advisers because they had been urging him to make an effort he was unable to make."

Jaroslav Kaczynski, another former intimate of the

president, said: "In matters of crucial importance to the state, Wachowski exerts an extremely negative influence on Walesa... If I were to deduce Wachowski's goals from his conduct I would say they are to petrify the communist system of influence with-

in the state authorities and block a policy which brings us closer to the West."

On reading these and other comments in the newspapers this week, Mr Walesa said only that he was glad to have shed such small-minded advisers.

UN rules out peace force for Bosnia

By TIM JUDAH
IN SARAJEVO AND
OUR FOREIGN STAFF

AFTER a night of violence in Bosnia, the United Nations ruled out sending a peace-keeping force to the strife-torn republic. The UN secretary-general, Dr Boutros Boutros Ghali, said such a move was not feasible.

His comments came as the Yugoslav army announced that Croatian forces had overrun and looted two arms factories in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It also said that it had been forced to evacuate a besieged barracks in the south of the republic.

Earlier, the guns had fallen silent across Bosnia as a European Community-brokered ceasefire began to take hold. The Yugoslav army, cited by the Belgrade news agency Tanjug, said that one factory making artillery pieces and mortars in the central town of Travnik had been taken by Croats on Tuesday. It said that the second, in Konjic in the south-west, made munitions.

The army accused extremist Croat paramilitaries infiltrated from Croatia of being behind the capture of the factories and of forcing the evacuation of 170 soldiers and civilians from the mainly Croat populated town of Capljina. While some Croats fighting in Bosnia have crossed what is now an internationally-recognised frontier, the majority are Bosnian Croats.

In central Sarajevo yesterday throngs of people filled the streets enjoying the second day of calm in the city. But Muslim villagers from Gornji Kotorac just outside Sarajevo were escorted by United Nations peacekeeping troops into the centre of town. They claimed that their village had been bombarded overnight by the Yugoslav army.

"We were completely unprepared," said one woman who had fled with her daughter aged six. "We had just been enjoying the quiet, then it all began."

Gornji Kotorac lies just



outside Ilidza, a town on the western outskirts of Sarajevo. Fierce overnight fighting around Ilidza, in breach of Thursday's ceasefire agreement, gave rise to reports that Sarajevo itself was being subjected to an intense bombardment. In fact fighting was contained in Ilidza and near Sarajevo airport.

Staying in Sarajevo itself, though, was Bernard Kouchner, France's intrepid minister of health and humanitarian action and founder of Médecins Sans Frontières. On Thursday M Kouchner brought a military cargo plane full of much-needed medical supplies, food and milk to Sarajevo.

Reshuffle postponed by Yeltsin

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY
IN MOSCOW

THE Russian government, which came under fire at this month's Congress of People's Deputies for its "shock therapy" economic reforms, has put off expected personnel changes, but conceded a substantial relaxation of monetary policy.

In a further retreat, the planned liberalisation of energy prices has been replaced by new, albeit much higher, ceiling prices for oil and gas, to be enforced by a system of punitive taxation. A senior government official admitted that the about-turn on monetary policy could affect the timing of Western financial help for Russia.

Yesterday's meeting of the Russian government was the first since the congress tried to slow down the economic reforms, and had been expected to produce several new ministers, as well as "adjustments" in policy. In the event, President Yeltsin failed to attend the meeting, delegating the chairmanship to Yegor Gaidar, the first deputy prime minister, and it dealt only with policy.

Mr Yeltsin's absence was seen more as an expression of confidence in Mr Gaidar than as evidence of indisposition. It also allowed the delicate matter of personnel changes to be postponed.

Kiev. Yuri Shcherbak, Ukraine's environment minister, yesterday marked the sixth anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear accident with a plea for Western help. He insisted that his country could not cope single-handed with the numerous problems it has inherited from the world's worst nuclear disaster. (Reuters)

Soviet Mata Hari falls on hard times

FROM BRUCE CLARK IN MOSCOW

THE Golden Profession, as spying for the Soviet motherland used to be called, has little to distinguish it from the world's oldest profession, except that it provides less financial security, according to a superannuated woman spy.

"The situation of a retired prostitute is more favourable than mine," said the former officer in Soviet military intelligence and practitioner of sexual blackmail, named only as Nadezhda M, in an interview with the mass-circulation daily *Trud*.

"She (the prostitute) knows what she has been struggling for all her life and what she can count on in old age. I have been left with nothing to live on," lamented the woman, whose account of life in the Soviet expatriate community in Paris sounds anything but glamorous.

It appears that she and her fellow Mata Haris were not specifically instructed to recruit informers by means of seduction, but merely given so little money that there was little choice but to use one's sexual charms. On one assignment, which ended with

the successful seduction of an aviation industry boss whose sexual tastes were known to be unusual, she was given only 700 French francs (£70) for working expenses.

"Even the least greedy of Frenchmen would need more than 7,000 francs to be 'turned'... unless of course you find some other levers, like blackmail and bed," she said. In addition, she became involved in the bizarre games of sexual blackmail and mutual denunciation that went on within the Soviet community of diplomats, journalists and trade officials.

"A friend of mine from the ministry of shipping had three lovers and she used to inform on them all. I wasn't averse to such things either. I knew it was necessary," she recalls.

But such was the atmosphere of mutual suspicion that one never knew when secrets confided to a close girlfriend would lead to one's recall to Moscow in disgrace. Nadezhda's career in Paris ended when her husband was caught receiving documents from an agent she had recruited and they were expelled.

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Gaddafi 'spurned Egyptian and Saudi calls to stand down'

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN CAIRO AND MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

AS LIBYA becomes daily more isolated after the imposition of sanctions and the expulsion of foreign journalists, diplomats in Tripoli yesterday reported further dissent in Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's administration.

A European envoy said the Libyan leader had been angered by recent suggestions from Egypt and Saudi Arabia that he might defuse the Lockerbie confrontation by agreeing to stand down and hand power to some of his edified opponents. The diplomat said that the Saudis and the Egyptians, both close allies of America, had offered Colonel Gaddafi asylum and a guarantee that he would not be liable for extradition should the two Pan Am bombing suspects be found guilty at any trial.

"Gaddafi was very angry at what was being suggested to him by two fellow Arab countries," the envoy said. "My personal evaluation is that he will never give up willingly. If you are a prophet... you are willing to die for your cause."

The envoy repeated his claim about the attempt to persuade Colonel Gaddafi to stand down in two interviews.

Earlier, the Egyptian media had reported that Libya failed to follow Egyptian advice "to look for a new method of ruling to restore the credibility of the Libyan regime".

The Tripoli-based diplomat said that public discontent in the capital with the administration's handling of the issue was more open and more widely felt than during any previous showdown with the West. "In the last two years, the Libyans have been enjoying their own economic perestroika and they are not happy at the prospect of losing these freedoms," an Egyptian businessman who deals with Libya said. "There are many who do not feel the cause of these two individuals is worth sacrificing everything for."

Divisions within the regime have emerged between Colonel Gaddafi and a harder-line faction led by Major Abdel-Salam Jalloud, the leader of the Revolutionary Committee and head of the powerful tribe to which one of the two Lockerbie suspects, Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi, belongs. According to diplomatic reports, Major Jalloud has blocked a voluntary surrender by the two wanted men.

This had been seen by Arab League officials as the most likely formula for a negotiated solution.

"Jalloud is determined to play this as a confrontation with Western imperialism and with the Christian and Jewish enemy. Gaddafi is sometimes against him, and sometimes swayed by him," one Arab official said. "That is why there is such an element of schizophrenia in Libya's responses."

● Moscow: Russia yesterday announced a diplomatic "charm offensive" aimed at the pro-Western nations of the Middle East, as it reluctantly started implementing sanctions against Libya. (Bruce Clark writes). There now seems little hope of Russia receiving the \$500 million (£283 million) in annual debt repayments that Libya had agreed for the next five years.

Aleksandr Rutskoi, the vice-president, is to visit Israel and Egypt with businessmen and agricultural specialists. Andrei Kozlov, the foreign minister, is to go to Saudi Arabia and five neighbouring states for talks on "collective security arrangements" and on technology exchanges.

Kabul's political prisoners set free

Christopher Thomas sees the gate swing open at Afghanistan's once-notorious Pulechacki jail

MUJAHIDIN fighters arrived at Pulechacki jail, 15 miles from Kabul, a few days ago in trucks and armoured personnel carriers. Since then the towering gates have swung open once a day to let hundreds of political prisoners go free. This is proof of who runs Afghanistan now.

The prisoners are thin, ragged but smiling. Pulechacki has for years been acknowledged as one of the most notorious prisons in the world, where opponents of successive regimes have been imprisoned and frequently tortured. Muhammad Najibullah, the deposed president, incarcerated hundreds of men. Four were kept in each tiny cell and until the International Committee of the Red Cross began prison visits in 1987, inmates were not even allowed out for exercise.

Decrees have been issued for the release of all political prisoners in the jail, except those accused of murder and terrorism. About 1,200 have been freed so far. Criminals have rioted in anger and frustration watching other inmates walk out to be greeted by relatives in tearful reunions.

The main outer walls are half a mile long and contain thousands of prisoners. Nobody was freed yesterday because it was Friday, but a woman called Bibi waited anyway in case her teenage son, Azimullah, was let out. She said she was not sure why he had been jailed five months ago, leaving her destitute because her husband and other two sons had died in the war. She is 42 but looks 60. She said: "I will wait here until he comes out. He is all I have."

Throughout Afghanistan the jails have been emptied of political prisoners. The eastern city of Jalalabad fell peacefully to an army-rebel



Prayer meeting: Muslims worshipping yesterday in the main square of Kabul for the first time since the collapse of President Najibullah's administration

coalition yesterday. Kabul is the only government town not yet captured.

Muhammad Ali, one of several Mujahidin waiting outside Pulechacki, said there was no need to break in to free his comrades. "Kabul is in our hands already. We are waiting for orders to move into the city. As soon as we are properly in control, the jail will be opened. That will probably happen in three or four days."

Mr Ali had a two-way radio which kept him in touch with his Jamiat-Islami commander in the

city. "We have men in Kabul but they are not allowed to do anything. They are there in case we have to take the city in a hurry."

A few miles from Pulechacki, an army checkpoint collects guns from rebels heading for Kabul. Mujahidin commanders are there to ensure that their men disarm. This determination to prevent trouble in the capital is clear.

Mr Ali, leaning on his AK-47, said he wanted to buy clothes and look at the shops. He may be disappointed: the city that in the

1970s had a thriving nightlife is smashed. The 1972 edition of *A Historical Guide to Kabul* declares a new phenomenon has been "the opening of many small restaurants and clubs which offer music and dancing".

Mr Ali will find nothing of the sort when he enters Kabul for the first time. But after 10 years in the mountains he says: "Anything is better than what I have seen. I want to live in peace. Perhaps I will find a job and settle down."

Council agreed, page 1

Rangoon purges moderates

Dhaka: The hardliners in Burma's ruling military junta have strengthened their grip on the country and are purging moderates led by General Saw Maung who resigned as de facto head of state reportedly on health grounds. (Ahmed Fazi writes).

General Saw Maung, 63, who had been head of the State Law and Order Restoration Council, the formal name of the ruling junta, was replaced by his deputy, General Than Shwe, 59. Rangoon radio said General Saw Maung's health had been failing and he was unable to cope with "heavy responsibilities".

Diplomatic sources said General Tan Shwe will be a figurehead with real power wielded by Major General Khin Nyunt, the intelligence chief.

Briton hanged

Bangkok: Stephen Harris, 33, from Nottingham, a Briton jailed for 25 years for heroin trafficking, has been found hanged in his cell at a Bangkok prison. A Thai prison official said. Prison officials believe he committed suicide but ordered an investigation. (Reuters)

War costed

Abu Dhabi: The Gulf war caused losses of up to \$800 billion (£450 billion) for Arab countries through destruction in Kuwait and Iraq, oil pollution and damage to economies, said Osama al-Faqih, the chairman of the Arab Monetary Fund. (AFP)

Village raided

Dek Bridge, Cambodia: Khmer Rouge guerrillas attacked a government-held village 25 miles north of Phnom Penh, the Cambodian capital. It was the first attack in the area since a peace accord was signed in October to end 13 years of civil war. (Reuters)

Dealers fought

Havana: Cuba and Venezuela have set up a joint commission to co-ordinate efforts to combat international drug trafficking. Communist Cuba lies across routes used by international traffickers to smuggle drugs from Latin America to the United States. (Reuters)

Enquiry sought

Delhi: India's ruling Congress (I) party is calling for the government to set up a commission to investigate alleged human rights violations in the country. "Human rights has climbed to the top of the international agenda," a party official said. (Reuters)

Heavy penalty

Delhi: Police charged an elephant named Champa with manslaughter and bound her in chains after she trampled to death a drunken man who was said to have tormented her with needles. Her two owners were also arrested. (AFP)

Age brushoff

Peking: Chinese consumers are being urged to brush away the ills of old age with a new toothpaste containing superoxide dismutase, Sod for short. (Reuters)

Sepa ralli Queb

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SEPA RALLI QUEB... (Text is partially cut off and illegible)

Rushdie fatwa remains

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Deposit Account	3.40	2.55
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TIMESAVER Account (£1 - £249)	3.40	2.55
(£250 - £999)	4.78	3.55
(£1,000 plus)	6.07	4.55
MAXIMISER Bonus Account		
£1,000 - £9,999	8.85	6.64
£10,000 plus	9.85	7.39
MAXIMISER Option 1 (Income)	8.65	6.49
	8.35	6.26
MAXIMISER Option 3 (Income)	9.35	7.01
	9.00	6.75
MAXIMISER Option 6 (Income)	10.45	7.84
	10.00	7.50
MAXIMISER Tax Plan Account	9.35	7.01
MAXIMISER Elite 8		
£5,000 - £24,999	10.90	8.18
£25,000 plus	11.25	8.44
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£25,000 plus	10.95	8.21

Scheme	Gross % P.A.	Bonus Gross % P.A.	Tax Exempt % P.A.
MAXIMISER Classic TESSA Account	8.50	+	1.00 = 9.50
MAXIMISER Optimum TESSA Account	9.70	+	1.00 = 10.70
MAXIMISER High-Return TESSA Account	10.70	+	1.00 = 11.70

Scheme	Gross % P.A.	Net Equiv. % P.A.
MAXIMISER High-Return Feeder Account	11.70	8.78

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£5,000 plus	9.00	6.75
MAXIMISER Growth Account		
£5,000 plus	9.35	7.01
MAXIMISER Top Rate Account (Income)	9.90	7.43
	9.45	7.09
MAXIMISER Two Year Bond (all matured bonds)	3.40	2.55
MAXIMISER Elite I, II, III, IV, V	9.35	7.01
Elite VI £1 - £999	3.40	2.55
£1,000 - £9,999	7.85	5.89
£10,000 plus	8.85	6.64
Elite VII £5,000 - £24,999	10.90	8.18
£25,000 plus	11.25	8.44
Premium Access (Issue 1)	6.64	4.98
(Issue 2)	6.73	5.05
Real Gold Account (including full bonus)	7.27	5.45
Extra Interest and Extra Income	6.64	4.98
High Income	8.35	6.26
High Interest	8.65	6.49
Acorn/Classmate	3.40	2.55
Overseas Resident Account	8.50	-
High Flyer Issue 1 £1,000 - £9,999	7.85	5.89
£10,000 plus	8.85	6.64
Optimum 2		
Matured	11.25	8.44
Summit Bond Issue 2 £2,000 - £24,999	10.90	8.18
£25,000 plus	11.25	8.44
Matured Bonds in the following issues - 1 Year Term		
Share, Summit Bond, 6 Month Term Share, Spa Bond	7.85	5.89
Super 90 £1,000 - £24,999	9.35	7.01
£25,000 plus (Income)	10.40	7.80
	9.30	6.98
Spa TESSA 1	11.20	
TESSA 2	10.70	

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Japanese jams tarnish Golden Week

Headless of clogged roads, millions are expected to embark on a national holiday trip, Joanna Pitman writes from Tokyo

NEXT week marks the beginning of Golden Week, the one chance in the year for Japan's overstretched salarymen, or white-collar workers, to take advantage of a series of four national holidays without risking demotion at the hands of a censorious boss.

But every year - because some 60 million salarymen and their families jump at the chance of a guilt-free, six-day break - the nation unfailingly grinds to a halt with hopeless traffic jams up to 50 miles long, overcrowded trains and bursting holiday resorts.

Despite a popular new film called *Jurai* (Traffic Jam), which reminds the Japanese of the folly of driving anywhere during Golden Week, millions are expected to take to the road. *Jurai* follows the hapless Fujimura family

crawling through appalling tailbacks, collapsing exhausted in overpriced motorway motels and attempting unsuccessfully to calm their squabbling children.

Ten minutes after leaving their Tokyo home, they run into their first piece of bad news: a highway sign which reads "Stop and go traffic - next 100 km." Things go from bad to disastrous and the family ends up spending its six-day holiday snarled in traffic jams.

The film is horrifyingly true to life. My first and thankfully last experience in a serious Japanese jam lasted 11 hours, during

which we covered less than 150 miles. I saw teenagers wander off on solitary walks up and down the lines of traffic, clearly fighting the urge to abandon their families and hop on the nearest train home. I overheard frantic fathers, unaccustomed to family holidays cooped up in the car and needed by over-tired children, conferring with their motorway neighbours, wishing they were all safely back in the office.

For them the family atmosphere was poisoned by a resentful gloom. But for others the traffic jam appeared to be part of the fun, involving impromptu picnic par-

ties on the hard shoulder organised by patient fathers. The crowds and queues are now so familiar to Japanese travellers that they have come to represent the tradition of Golden Week. Last year, 69 million visited festivals, 17 million filling at a snail's pace through the cherry blossom festival in the northern town of Hiroaki and 12 million craning their necks to get a peek at the Hiroshima flower festival.

Those hoping to find peace and quiet by climbing Mount Takao discovered that 8,000 others had had the same idea and were camped all over the summit, clicking camera shutters and chattering like vast flocks of starlings. This year, the Japan Travel Bureau has estimated that 744,000 will climb mountains and 19 million will make train journeys.

US court rejects bail for Tyson

Indiana's supreme court has unanimously refused to release Mike Tyson on bail pending his appeal against a rape conviction, making it likely that he will remain in jail for at least the next six months. Alana Dershowitz, representing Tyson, wanted the court to free the former world heavyweight boxing champion while his conviction is under appeal. He told the court Tyson was willing to remain under house arrest at his mansion in Ohio. Tyson was sentenced to six years in jail on March 26 for raping a contestant in a beauty pageant. The judge who sentenced him sent him directly to jail, saying that if he were granted bail he might rape again or flee the country.

Two Italian scientists studying octopuses have found that going to school or having a backbone are not essential to be able to learn. After one octopus was trained to pick a certain colour ball, his "students" learned to do the same by watching him. The scientists, Graziano Fiorito and Pietro Scotto, were interested in octopuses because they

have big brains, no backbone and no friends.

Brazil has granted a visa to the Dalai Lama, the spiritual and political figure many Tibetans consider a living god. The government said the Nobel Peace Prize winner would visit Brazil from June 4 to 8. He will participate in the UN-sponsored Earth Summit environmental conference to be held in Rio de Janeiro.

More than 200 University of Michigan students celebrated the last day of classes by jogging a mile in the nude. Most of those running in the seventh-annual nude mile shortly after midnight were campus athletes. One man completed the course on crutches. "This is a good study break," said law student Karen Liberty, 23. "I have a choice of looking at these men or corporate tax." Runners wore lacrosse helmets, swimming caps, cowboy hats, Viking horns and ski masks. Members of the Michigan crew, who claim credit for starting the mile in 1986, carried their oars.

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Prizes raised

Stockholm: The Nobel Foundation, which manages the prizes, has raised the prize money for the Nobel Peace Prize from \$500,000 to \$600,000 (£310,000) to help pay for inflation. (Reuters)

Gang escape

Hong Kong: At least 10 people were injured in a battle in Kowloon between police and jewel thieves. Three hand grenades hijacked a minibus escape. (AFP)

Victim buried

Madrid: Juan Manuel, 33, a plainclothes policeman who was the 19th victim of terrorist violence in Spain this year, has been buried amid allegations of incompetence against senior officers. (Reuters)

Tarnished gold

Stockholm: Sweden's gold coins, which are used for the Nobel Prize, have been found to contain traces of lead. The coins, which were minted in 1942, had been raised to \$1 million (£614,000) to help pay for inflation. (Reuters)

Jailers tricked

Nairobi: A jailed man tricked the authorities into believing that he was a woman and was exposed when female prisoners refused to complain about his advances. (Reuters)

Separatists rally over Quebec poll

FROM JOHN BEST IN OTTAWA

SEVEN fateful words uttered by Robert Bourassa, the premier of Quebec province, may have tipped the scales against Quebec's separation from Canada. At the same time they have provoked cries of betrayal from Quebec separatists, and goaded them into a new effort to rally the forces struggling for independence.

Mr Bourassa's Liberal government is obliged by law to hold a referendum on sovereignty for the French-speaking province no later than October 26. The law was passed by the legislature in Quebec in angry response to the collapse of a federal-provincial constitutional accord, favoured in Quebec, two years ago.

However, in a recent interview with the French newspaper *Le Monde*, Mr Bourassa said that he was awaiting proposals from the federal government on ways to renew Canadian federalism, and added: "The referendum will be on these offers." His Liberal majority government was prepared to amend the existing statute to reflect the change in plan.

Mr Bourassa's surprise declaration was warmly welcomed in most of English-speaking Canada and was applauded by the federal government in Ottawa. However, in Quebec it dropped like a bombshell.

"We now know that his choice is Canada," Jacques Brassard, constitutional affairs spokesman for the Parti Québécois, the official opposition party, commented. The party is a strong advocate of Quebec independence. There were even rumblings within the Liberal party itself, with some prominent members saying Mr Bourassa would risk splitting the party if he did not adhere to the original referendum plan.

The separatist movement erupted in bitterness and outrage. A pro-independence umbrella group, the Mouve-

ment Québec, announced that 250,000 people in Quebec had signed a petition demanding a vote on independence, and forecast that a million will have signed by the middle of June.

The leader of one of the umbrella group's member organisations predicted a "long, hot, fantastic summer", with separatists taking to the streets of Montreal to demand that Mr Bourassa respect the present referendum statute.

The storm in Quebec was a measure of the gamble Mr Bourassa, a wily politician famous for his ability to play the waiting game and avoid making rash decisions, was taking in showing his hand before seeing what the federal government plans to offer Quebec.

Opinion surveys since the collapse two years ago of the Meech Lake accord, aimed at ending Quebec's long constitutional estrangement from the rest of Canada, have repeatedly shown most people in Quebec favour sovereignty. More recent polls, however, have indicated a slippage in support for the separatists' cause.

Intense behind-the-scenes negotiations have been going on among the federal government and the English-speaking provinces, aimed at forging an agreement acceptable to all the provinces. Quebec included, as well as to Canada's million or so aboriginal people. Ottawa is expected to unveil its resulting plan of constitutional renewal in late May.

In his interview with *Le Monde*, Mr Bourassa emphasised that any settlement would have to incorporate the substance of the Meech Lake accord, which among other things recognised Quebec as a "distinct society" within the country. He also underlined the need for a new alignment of federal and provincial powers.



Pooling resources: a Filipino fisherman sharing a refreshing dawn dip with his pet pig in the sea near the village of Panagsama, on the central Philippines island of Cebu, before the heat of the day builds up

Barry welcomed home as saviour

FROM JAMIE DETTMER IN WASHINGTON

ONE newspaper columnist called it "a modern-day illustration of the biblical prodigal son". Another wrote that "the only thing missing was the red carpet". Washington woke up yesterday morning to the prospect of Marion Barry, its disgraced former mayor, running for office again.

Soon after his release on Thursday from a federal jail in Pennsylvania, where he had completed a six-month term for cocaine possession, Mr Barry was being greeted as a political saviour.

Few among the crowd of 300 supporters who travelled to celebrate Mr Barry's release at a hotel near Loreto prison discussed in detail his political prospects. "This is about L-O-V-E," said the Rev Willie Wilson. "We just didn't want him coming back into the world alone," said another supporter.

The congregation at the Union Temple Baptist church in the rundown Anacostia district of Washington, where Mr Barry went briefly on Thursday night, were also not urging him openly to run for city office again. In a near-revival atmosphere, all they

could do was echo the black spiritual quoted frequently by Martin Luther King: "Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty we are free at last". But few doubt that the mayor-for-life, as he is nicknamed, will become a force again in Washington politics.

As one columnist on *The Washington Times* put it: "No fatted calf was slaughtered by supporters at his homecoming, but some of them hope to serve up an incumbent council member as a symbolic substitute."

Mr Barry, the son of a cleaning woman who worked his way up to almost gaining a Ph D in chemistry, strikes a particularly strong resonance with the black underclass. "He is within the people's heart," said Margaret Harrison, one of the people on the so-called Caravan of Love who went to greet the former mayor in Pennsylvania.

Several civic leaders criticised the welcome-home celebrations for Mr Barry as inappropriate for a man convicted of smoking cocaine. "This city needs to be healed, not be torn assunder again," said his successor, Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly.

Rushdie fatwa remains

London: Talks between British and Iranian officials about the fatwa on the author Salman Rushdie failed to make any progress yesterday (Lin Jenkins writes).

Douglas Hogg, Foreign Office minister, spent an hour with Hamid Asefi, director-general for west European affairs at the Iranian foreign ministry, discussing a number of matters including the dispute between the former Soviet republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Mr Asefi, who is on an official visit to London, said afterwards that Iran's position on the death sentence imposed by Ayatollah Khomeini on Rushdie after the publication of *The Satanic Verses* remained unaltered. "The answer to it has not changed," he said.

Prizes raised

Stockholm: The Nobel Foundation, which manages money used for the Nobel prizes, said each 1992 award's value had been raised to \$1.08 million (£614,000) to compensate for inflation. (Reuters)

Gang escapes

Hong Kong: At least 12 people were injured in a gun battle in Kowloon between police and jewel thieves who threw hand grenades and hijacked a minibus to escape. (AFP)

Victim buried

Madrid: Juan Manuel Heli-ces, 33, a plainclothes policeman who was the 19th victim of terrorist violence in Spain this year, has been buried amid allegations of incompetence against senior officers.

Tarnished gold

Stockholm: Sweden offered to pay Estonia and Lithuania \$45.3 million (£26 million) out of planned aid as compensation for gold Swedish authorities handed over to Moscow in 1940. (Reuters)

Jailers tricked

Nairobi: A jailed Kenyan man tricked the authorities into believing that he was a woman and was exposed only when female prisoners began to complain about his amorous advances. (Reuters)



Presley: well-scrubbed rockabilly image wins

'Prince' Elvis triumphs

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

AT LEAST one American election achieved a high turnout this year in spite of the so-called "character issue": the US Postal Service says more than a million people voted in the three-week postal ballot to choose which of two pictures of Elvis Presley will appear on new stamps.

The result of the poll, which closed yesterday, will define the mood of America just as fully as this autumn's presidential election. Voters were asked to choose between a handsome young star and a bloated older man.

Preliminary indications are that the young, rockabilly Elvis of the 1950s has won by as much as 4-1 over the rather tragic picture of the crooner just before his death at 42. The support for the younger Elvis has been so strong that about the only category of citizen to favour the paunchy older version seems to be Elvis impersonators, most of them getting to look rather that way themselves.

A typical editorial, headlined "The Elvis Stamp: Vote for the Young Guy", said people should "put that well-scrubbed innocence on the stamp, not his sad later years".

John Berkey, who painted the portrait of the older Elvis, found it necessary to go public to counter criticism of his work. "I understand what happened, the negative feelings. But I painted the King. That other guy is the prince," he said.

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Clifford Longley

A marriage of true minds has little to do with law

B old though the Mothers' Union is in even proposing the decriminalisation of prostitution, the suggestion that "living together before marriage" might not be sinful is the more radical idea. Both convulsions in traditional sexual morality occurred in the same edition of the Mothers' Union magazine *Home and Family*, published this week.

How society handles prostitution is essentially a political and legal matter. Nobody pretends that resorting to prostitutes is a matter of high moral principle. But coming to terms with couples who live together without formal benefit of matrimony means coming to terms with a change in morality. This is not necessarily the straight contradiction of past moral conventions that the phrase "living in sin" implies. The *Home and Family* article, by Mrs Rachel Nugee, may represent a subtle shift from a legal to a psychological, even intuitionist, notion of what marriage is about.

Mrs Nugee, who was once a member of a committee on marriage set up by the General Synod of the Church of England, observed the recent marriage of a young couple she knew, who had not only lived together for six years but had twice separated and reunited in that time. The woman said that the absence of formal legal ties had made it easier to resolve their differences and be reconciled after separation. This had to do with the absence of the outside pressure which marriage seems to bring. Having finally held a wedding ceremony, however, she said she felt she had been married to her husband "for years".

The church report to which Mrs Nugee contributed concluded that marriage is a "distinctly human but not specifically Christian" institution, meaning it is part of the natural created order to which one is admitted by common humanity, rather than of the sacramental order to which one is admitted by Christian baptism. There is more than a hint of the old Stoic theory of natural law behind such talk of a natural order, for it suggests that marriage has a shape which is given, rather than being so plastic that it can be remoulded at will as demands and conditions change.

Externals can change, certainly, but not the essentials, which include an intention of permanence and exclusivity — monogamy and fidelity. These are still part of the legal definition of marriage in English law, so that a contract drawn up between a man and woman which explicitly denied such conditions would render a marriage legally invalid.

But since the 18th century, the law has insisted on one further condition which forms no part of any natural order or natural law of marriage, namely that the start of the marriage should be marked by a public ceremony in which promises are formally exchanged. Without that ceremony, says the civil law, there is no legal marriage. But might it not be that the true metaphysics of marriage is an invisible reality sensed by the couple (and perhaps by those who know them well)? And if Mrs Nugee's intuition is right, might this not exist regardless of the law?

Yet this alternative, non-legal theory of marriage still does not quite explain everything. In the end, Mrs Nugee's couple did marry publicly and formally, and when the day came, "they were both radiant". If the legal process of marriage is no more than the acquisition of a piece of paper, why did the lack of such a document make any difference to peaceful reconciliation of differences which had come close to wrecking the relationship?

These are not uncommon observations. Furthermore it has been observed in other connections that new strains sometimes appear when a couple who have lived together embark on legal marriage. The pressure to play certain roles and the invocation of parental models of marriage seem to disturb an earlier equilibrium reached out privately by the couple for themselves. Public legal marriage, clearly, is still sought after as the icing on the cake of a stable conjugal relationship; and yet it is not without its dangers — of raised expectations, and of self-applied pressure to conform to possibly unhealthy cultural patterns of married life.

A church, like any institution which cares for people in their families and marriages, must reach some understanding of the psychological dynamics in play before it moves to preach or judge. A church, too, can have an intuition of the reality of marriage. And if that intuition contradicts what was assumed to be an unyielding moral principle, it may be the principle that was misunderstood, not the reality.

Arnold Wolfendale, Astronomer Royal, assesses the new evidence on the universe's origins

Fitting the cosmic jigsaw

O f the physical sciences, astronomy is unique in its popular appeal, and within it cosmology stands supreme. Just how did the universe start? How did galaxies form and stars, and planets and...? No one who has looked at the sky on a dark moonless night can fail to be moved by the vastness and beauty of the heavens or not want to know more about it. Hence the excitement at this week's announcement by Dr George Smoot in Washington that the Cosmic Background Explorer Satellite has detected evidence for the birth of the universe in the form of huge ripples of matter at the universe's edge.

To understand the significance of this finding, we need to know how it fits into the now conventional Big Bang theory of the origins of the universe. According to this theory, some 15,000 million years ago a "big bang" marked the start of both space and time. After some very early mischief, which we still do not understand, the light nuclei

formed — mainly hydrogen and helium — but it was not until some half a million years after the Big Bang that the temperature had reduced enough for the nuclei to capture electrons and form atoms. Later, these atoms clumped together to form "clouds", from which the galaxies grew.

The Big Bang theory received great support in 1964 with the discovery by Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson at the Bell Telephone Laboratories of the so-called "cosmic microwave background" — radiation at a temperature of nearly three degrees Kelvin, and the birth of observational cosmology stems from that time.

This low-temperature radiation glow — the embers of the Big Bang — should have within it the imprints of tiny enhancements of radiation showing the

hotspots on which galaxies were to form much later on. It is these imprints that our colleagues in America claim to have found. Many theoretical cosmologists confidently predicted they were present, but it must be admitted that some had almost begun to despair because of the difficulty of seeing them (their magnitude corresponding only to about one part in one hundred thousand).

The main difficulty has been in distinguishing the observed signals — previously detected mainly by radio telescopes — from effects due to cosmic ray electrons wandering about in our own galaxy. My own research group showed that some previous hints could be explained in this way, and the effects went away when new observations were made.

The virtue of the latest results is that they have been made at

higher frequencies than can be used from the ground, and where the "cosmic ray foreground" can be guaranteed to be small. Nevertheless, there are other hazards which have to be taken into account, most notably the effect of dust in the space between the stars. This dust is warmed by starlight and can mimic the sought-for effects if one is not careful. My first inclination was to be very sceptical about the results, having been brought up on the Russian cosmologist Lev Landau's dictum "cosmology is often wrong, but never in doubt".

Dr Smoot's comment about the presence of "ripples" of wispy clouds worried me mightily, not to mention the fact that the claimed detection is on the edge of their limit of detectability. However, having received a

message from an old student who worked with me on the dust problem and is now a member of the Cosmic Background Explorer team, I am rather happier. He tells me that the results pass all the tests. Nevertheless, great care is still needed, and it is a pity that there has been such a great flurry of publicity about the results before the scientific community has had the chance to go through them thoroughly. This will certainly need to be done.

What should our reaction be to the discovery if, as seems likely, it is correct? A sense of perspective is necessary. The Big Bang theory was so well developed in other ways that it would have been more exciting, in one respect, if the small signals had not been present. We should regard the observations as providing another piece of the

cosmic jigsaw which is allowing us to evolve "a theory of everything" (everything, that is, in the material world — I see nothing to militate against the existence of God in any of the work that has been done; the reverse, perhaps).

Among astronomers, the hunt will quicken for the dark matter which seems to account for some 95 per cent of the mass of the universe. I would regard the identification of whatever "particles" are responsible for this missing mass as just as important as this week's findings — perhaps even more so.

A related, and fascinating, question concerns the fate of the universe. Will it expand forever, or eventually return to a "Big Crunch", from which perhaps another universe would grow, and so on? The simplest Cold Dark Matter model, which the present work supports, suggests that the universe is so finely tuned that it will come back, but only after an infinite time. Cosmology will not cease to fascinate.

John Grigg on the changes in popular taste which consign famous writers to obscurity

A t the end of this month Penguin will start re-issuing the complete fiction of Angus Wilson, whose books they stopped publishing in his later years, presumably because he had gone out of fashion. Clearly a determined effort is now being made to revive interest in his work, and with the benefit of a TV tie-in (a dramatisation of *Anglo-Saxon Attitudes* is to be shown next month), the relaunch has a good chance of success, at any rate in the short term.

The fate of some literary reputations, great in their day, is a perpetual *memento mori* to successful writers. Who, for instance, has now heard of Harrison Ainsworth, let alone read him? Yet in the middle of the last century he was one of the most famous of all English writers, rating an entry in the 1865 edition of Routledge's biographical dictionary, *Men of the Time*, not much shorter than Dickens's and far longer than Trollope's.

Ainsworth was a Mancunian, born in 1805. His genre was the historical novel, and his early work received Scott's blessing. In the last year of his life (he died in 1882), his native city gave a banquet in his honour, at which the mayor of Manchester, in proposing his health, said: "In our Manchester public free libraries there are 250 volumes of Mr Ainsworth's different works. During the last twelve months those volumes have been read 7,660 times, mostly by the artisan class of readers. And this means that twenty volumes of his works are being perused in Manchester... every day all the year through."

But his popularity was not confined to Manchester. It was nationwide, and indeed extended to many foreign countries. He was very popular in America, and most of his books were translated into German, while a number of them appeared in French, Spanish, Dutch and Russian. Today almost all his work is out of print. Two of his books with Lancashire themes — *Lancashire Witches* and *Manchester Rebels*, or *The Fatal '45* — have been reprinted by small Lancashire publishers, but his main-line titles, such as *Windsor Castle* and *Old St Paul's*, are available only in secondhand bookshops.

In the next generation a comparable phenomenon, in scale of readership if not size of output, was Mrs Humphry Ward. A niece of Matthew Arnold, she took the world by storm with *Robert Elsmere* (1888), in which she challenged the miraculous element in Christianity, stressing instead its social mis-



Who reads them now? Hugh Walpole (left), Mrs Humphry Ward, and Harrison Ainsworth were all phenomenally successful during their lifetimes

tion. The book had such a disturbing effect on the aged Gladstone that he devoted a 10,000-word review to it in *The Nineteenth Century*. Nothing could have been better for sales, and the author's reputation was made.

Over the next ten years she wrote several more novels, and her earnings by the turn of the century were the equivalent of about £24 million in today's money. At this time, according to her admirable recent biography, John Sutherland, she was "probably the highest-paid woman in England".

Unlike Ainsworth, she saw her reputation as an author decline during her lifetime. Her later novels were less successful, although *Harvest*, published after her death in 1920, is described by Sutherland as "extraordinarily interesting".

It is not, however, in print; nor are any of her other works, except *Robert Elsmere* (OUP

paperback). *Helbeck of Bannisdale*, regarded by competent judges as her best book (though not to my taste), was available for a time as a Penguin, but is now out of print.

During the inter-war period, few novelists had a bigger following than Hugh Walpole. Born in New Zealand, he was educated in England and started writing in 1909. Soon afterwards he was taken up by Arnold Bennett and, particularly, Henry James. By the time of his death in 1941, he had produced 42 novels as well as volumes of stories and books about other writers.

He was a bestseller on both sides of the Atlantic, and also much in demand as a lecturer. He was painted by, among others, Augustus John and Sickert, and Epstein did a bronze of him. He was knighted shortly before the end of his life.

But since then he has suffered the fate of Ainsworth and Mrs Humphry Ward, and of others one might mention. The only one of his novels in print is *Vanessa* (Pan paperback) — rather strangely, because it is the last of a set of four novels, known as the Herries Saga, so if *Vanessa*, why not the other three? His book on Conrad is available in an American edition. For the rest, his work is out of print and out of mind.

A weakness common to Ainsworth, Ward and Walpole, which may account for their lack of staying-power, is a relative inability to create living characters. Walpole said of himself: "I am far too twisted and fantastic a novelist ever to succeed in catching Trollope's marvellous normality". Mrs Humphry Ward's characters tend to be symbols rather than individuals. And the DNB entry on Ainsworth says that the charm of his

novels "is not at all dependent upon the analysis of motives or subtle description of character". His forte is the vivid description of scenes and incidents.

Yet there is always something elusive in any attempt to assess who will survive and why. Works of reference should, therefore, be careful not to bet too heavily on any contemporary writer. The 1932 edition of *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, edited by Sir Paul Harvey, was ultra-conservative in giving only seven lines to T.S. Eliot and in not mentioning Evelyn Waugh (though *Decline and Fall* had been published in 1928).

On the other hand, the latest edition of the *Companion*, edited by Margaret Drabble, seems to err on the side of generosity to contemporaries. Doris Lessing, for instance, is given more space than Kipling. It is safest not to try to anticipate the judgment of posterity.

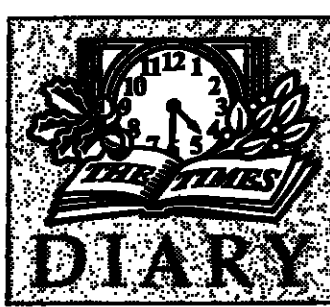
Grace preserve us

HEAVEN KNOWS what W.G. would have thought, but Lord's is about to throw open the Grace Gates to an unprecedented European invasion. Inspired by John Major's passion for the national game, as part of the celebrations to mark its presidency of the EC in July, Britain is to play host to a European cricket competition.

Ten European countries, mostly but not exclusively from the EC, have accepted the invitation to the tournament, which will culminate in a match at Lord's on July 17 and a dinner attended by John Major. "We have teams from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Malta, Portugal, Italy, Spain and Switzerland," says Ben Brocklehurst, chairman of *The Cricketer*, which is sponsoring the tournament jointly with the MCC.

After a knockout competition at Wokingham College, the winning team — and Belgium is seeded number one — will take on the MCC at Lord's.

The MCC will host a dinner at the ground, where Sir Leon Brittan, Britain's EC commissioner, will address the teams and their



ambassadors and sports ministers. "We are aiming to foster interest in cricket on the continent, and what better opportunity than Britain's presidency of the Community?" says Brocklehurst. *Le cricketer*, it seems, is becoming one of Britain's fastest-growing exports. France now has 18 clubs and Germany 28. For once Euro-integration is not such a one-way street. But there is a serious question. If cricket were to become a European game, what guarantee is there that Lord's would not be bombarded by Brussels directives demanding softer balls, bigger stumps and seven-ball overs?

Nor iron bars a cage

TERRY WAITE was last night back behind bars — in the solitary confinement of Cambridge University. The daylight in his Trinity Hall study is obscured by a large iron grille on the window, and although college beehives have no plans to die the former Church envoy to any nearby radiator, undergraduates are already musing on the similarity to his quarters in Beirut.

semblance. "I had never thought of it like that. The bars are not to keep me in. I think they are there to deter students from climbing in from the street."

● If the *Financial Times* is blushing pinker than usual today, put it down to the outspoken views of one of its more robust alumni, Nigel Lawson. The former chancellor took time yesterday from writing his memoirs to present the *Wincoat* awards for financial journalism, named after another august FT columnist. But Lawson could not resist mentioning that leading article of a couple of weeks ago, when the pink 'un lived up to its nickname and supported the Labour party at the general election. The noise, said Lawson, was Harold Wincoat spinning in his grave, either at the FT's "contempt for its readers, or at the intellectual paucity of its views".

Elegant farewell

BEFORE Chris Patten could confirm yesterday that he was taking the Hong Kong governor's post — as first tipped here on April 15 — he had one duty to perform. On Thursday night, at a dinner at his elegant Victoria flat, Patten summoned together the loyal Conservative campaign team from Bath which had worked in vain to secure his re-election to say thank you and goodbye.

Patten, his wife Lavender, and two of their three daughters, Laura and Alice, hosted a party for 15 of the former MP's closest colleagues from Bath. Pride of place was given to Freda Evans, the constituency secretary, who had been with Patten since he first won the seat in 1979. Also present were Neil Stephenson (his campaign manager), Stephen Bald (who ran the narrow 1987 election victory in the seat), Angie Bray (Pat-

ten's press officer), Patrick Rock (his former special adviser, who has now gone to work for Michael Howard) and John Gardiner (Patten's private secretary).

But Patten kept them guessing to the last. "You know what we all want to know," one told him. But he could not even tell his closest colleagues before yesterday's Foreign Office announcement. "Thank you very much everybody for everything you have done for me. Lavender and I felt we made many great friends. It was a great team and we had a good time," he told them in the course of an emotional speech. Freda Evans, proposing the toast to the party chairman, was visibly fighting back the tears. Despite Patten's reticence, they all knew that he was really trying to say goodbye.

No fun, minister

DAVID MELLOR will return to his desk next week to instruct the few staff he already has in place that they are to desist from referring to him as the "minister for fun". Mellor is due to announce on Monday his first appointment: Andrea MacLean to be head of information. Her first task is to shed the department's less-than-serious image.

Although it was the job the former Treasury man wanted, and he initially enjoyed the joke, the ambitious Mellor now feels that labels such as "the department of free tickets" are diminishing his standing as a politician. "I am the secretary of state for National Heritage," he insists privately.

Mellor's appearance at the Festival Hall on Thursday night, dressed in a Chelsea FC scarf, playing percussion on a football rattle in Leopold Mozart's Toy Symphony, must have been a temporary aberration.



...and moreover PHILIP HOWARD

Y our politics is a sore decay of your whorson dead language. A period of intense politics such as a general election exposes the latest lexis of political jargon so constantly that, with a bit of luck, the sillier clichés may become laughing-stocks, and die of shame. Most of the phrases were vivid images when they started, and have become mindless platitudes by constant repetition. It is time to sink "flagship" legislation with the poll tax, which it was used to describe. Navies these days keep in touch electronically, and the admiral's flag is a Nelsonian anachronism. "Hidden agenda" suggests espionage, as most political images try to import excitement into their dry trade from more popular sports. U-turns and taking the moral high ground were done to death in the recent linguistic scarpard. U-turns, reversals of direction, are seldom made on motorways or even in politics. The high ground matters less than it did at Balacava.

The most irritating and mischievous new boys to the 1992 election were the "spin-doctors": the brat pack and staffers and minders of all parties who tried to persuade the media to put a positive interpretation on their side of things, rang up newspapers and broadcasting stations to bully and cajole, and generally tried to manage the news before it reached the public. There is nothing new in this activity. It is called party politics, and you can read about

it, from Aristophanes to Trollope. It is the function of the good journalist to get at the news, as unvarnished as possible, through the twists and splinters of all sides. What is new is the name for the activity of trying to influence the presentation of the news.

Like much of our best slang, the image comes to us from America; and like much political metaphor, it is taken from the sporting field, which for some unaccountable reason the general public finds more interesting than politics. Spin is what a pitcher at baseball puts on the ball to make it harder to hit, having exchanged coded signals about his hidden agenda with the catcher, and wound himself up with rhythmic contortions on the diamond to mesmerise the batter. A spin-doctor in spring training camp in Arizona or Florida is a coach who trains a team's young pitchers to put more swing and swerve and general elusiveness on his balls. Spin swerving balls at the pool table also influenced the phrase.

In English cricket spin-bowling is a sadly neglected art. But the work of spin-doctors is done in the nets by coaches and managers and senior players, to train young bowlers. Play ball, and throw someone a curve!

that is favourable to the party of the interpreter, and specifically the efforts of campaign officials to convince reporters of their candidate's ability and popularity, came into the language during the presidency and elections of that corny old sports commentator, Ronnie Reagan. It is too new to have got into dictionaries, but the earliest citations are from five years ago, in inverted commas to indicate the novelty of the figure.

Here is a defining citation from the *Atlanta Journal* of 1987: "In political parlance, it is called 'spin control' — a campaign's attempt to influence reporters' interpretation of a news event. In the 1988 election, it is as critical as the candidate's performance, say some political operatives. In fact, 'it's too important', said Newton Minow, a Chicago lawyer and national expert on presidential debates. 'Very often, before the public has had the chance to digest what they saw and heard, the spin control guys are out trying to affect that.' And from *Newsweek* of December 1987: "To the average viewer of the presidential candidates' debate, there were no big winners, no big losers... This heightened the importance of the 'spin-doctors'. Good politicians have always been capable of putting their own spin on their campaigns. The concentration of electioneering on the mass media has made them introduce agents to assist. Journalists resent being doctored or spun by spin doctors."



in a match at Lord's on July 17 and a dinner attended by John Major. "We have teams from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Malta, Portugal, Italy, Spain and Switzerland," says Ben Brocklehurst, chairman of *The Cricketer*, which is sponsoring the tournament jointly with the MCC.



SER

Mr Major's appointment of Sir John Gummer as Secretary of State for Wales has been widely welcomed. The Welsh Government, led by Iwan Jones, has expressed its support for the move. Sir John Gummer, a former Conservative MP, is seen as a strong advocate of Welsh interests. His appointment is seen as a sign of the government's commitment to Wales. The Welsh Government has also welcomed the appointment of Sir John Gummer as Secretary of State for Wales. Sir John Gummer is a former Conservative MP and has been a strong advocate of Welsh interests. His appointment is seen as a sign of the government's commitment to Wales. The Welsh Government has also welcomed the appointment of Sir John Gummer as Secretary of State for Wales. Sir John Gummer is a former Conservative MP and has been a strong advocate of Welsh interests. His appointment is seen as a sign of the government's commitment to Wales. 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SERIOUS GOVERNING

John Major's appointment of Chris Patten as Britain's new and presumably last governor of Hong Kong is no sinecure. It is no consolation prize to a loyal lieutenant who won his party's election but lost his own. It is no imperial perk for a grandee down on his luck. It is deadly serious and had better work.

The appointment serves notice to Peking that Britain intends to govern the colony in earnest until it reverts to China in 1997. Such a message should not be necessary. The 1984 Sino-British Declaration on Hong Kong clearly states that Britain's writ runs until the flag is lowered. Since 1984, and particularly since cracking down on its democracy movement in 1989, China has sought to bypass the agreement and to treat its pledge of long-term autonomy for Hong Kong as dispensable. Mr Patten must convince Peking that the lines drawn in 1984 are not to be bent, that his is no twilight colonial regime.

The speed of Mr Patten's appointment and his credentials as a former cabinet minister give him a head start. China has tried two ways of undermining the Hong Kong Governor's authority, and through him that of any emerging democracy in Hong Kong. The first has been to demand a say in local decisions, such as over the new airport, last month's budget and plans to turn Hong Kong's radio and television into an independent corporation. The second has been to claim that pre-1997 "co-operation" is a matter for Peking and London, cutting Hong Kong out of the picture. These tactics are designed to sustain a political vacuum in the colony.

Mr Patten cannot here afford the lackadaisical style for which he is known in Whitehall. He must first override the view of many in the Foreign Office who are inclined to appease China, arguing that it is a big country with whom Britain has a long-term interest in good relations. Such a policy, they say, will help secure a trouble-free transition

for the next five years, after which who cares anyway? This view is supported in some measure by powerful corporate interests in Hong Kong, both British and Chinese, more interested in maximising today's profits than in securing for the colony as much long-term freedom as is remotely realistic.

Mr Patten must know that his policy horizon is not five years but 55 years: the period during which China pledged in 1984 to respect Hong Kong's capitalist system and internal autonomy. The only guarantee of that pledge is for Peking to inherit a fully fledged internal democracy, developed by Mr Patten in defiance of Peking. This means his working closely with the new intake of democratically elected members of Hong Kong's legislative council. It also means taking the decision to increase the number of such directly elected politicians.

This would reverse a policy still hidebound by old colonial suspicion of local politicians and by a Foreign Office fixation that it and it alone knows how to handle Peking. Hong Kong's Chinese leaders are understandably infuriated by such a policy, which they see as arrogant and dangerous to their long-term interest. They know China could undo such liberalisation in 1997, but that will then be their business.

Democracy may seem a frail shield as 1997 approaches, but there are others in the offing. Once a bill now going through the US Congress underwriting the 1984 autonomy provisions becomes law, probably this year, any dilution of Hong Kong autonomy would risk China's cherished most favoured nation trading status with America. China itself might change, might even itself liberalise, before the 1997 deadline. There is real advantage and no disadvantage in playing the democracy card in Hong Kong. Mr Patten has bitten off a tough job, with as great a possibility of failing as in his last post: the least he can do is leave Britain's last big colony a proper democracy.

Thatcher legacy in perspective

From Sir David Lane

Sir, I was sad to read your reports (April 21 and 22) of Mrs Thatcher's comments in *Newsweek*. If she had been on the doorstep during the general election campaign she could not have failed to hear the message from many uncommitted electors who finally — and decisively — voted Conservative but would not have done so had Mrs Thatcher still been prime minister.

As a former parliamentary colleague I hope that she will now get off Mr Major's back. Continued carping can only damage her reputation.

Yours truly,
DAVID LANE,
5 Spiny Drive,
Great Shelford, Cambridgeshire,
April 22.

From Mr Patrick F. P. Robertson

Sir, Lord St John of Fawley (letter, April 23) is right to point out that Mrs Thatcher's wider ownership policies were crucial in winning the election. He is quite out of touch, however, if he believes that as far as the electorate is concerned wider ownership is merely "one strain of the rich and varied legacy which constitutes the Conservative inheritance".

The overwhelming majority of Conservative voters in this country are not particularly interested in the Conservative party's rich and varied inheritance, whatever it may be. The reality is that they vote Conservative because they want the right of ownership of what should never have been taken from them in the first place and which Conservative administrations before 1979 connived with the socialists to keep from them: the ownership of their homes, the right to spend a greater portion of their incomes as they choose, the freedom to send their children to the schools they want, and the right to purchase shares in the economy to guarantee their independence of the state.

The prime minister recognises this and the party has endorsed that package, which is why John Major was mandated so strongly by the electorate to develop his own dimension to Mrs Thatcher's historic achievements.

Lord St John's desire to "take advantage of the Conservative party's whole tradition" risks causing a divisive debate. Many Conservatives would not be at ease if their party seemed willing to exchange the sovereignty of the British people for one twelfth of a voice in the EC. This is not "anti-European chauvinism" as Lord St John puts it and the tensions within the Conservative party are unlikely to be resolved by factional crowing every time Mrs Thatcher's remarks are taken out of context by the media.

If in fact Lord St John means by "tradition" a return to the sort of domineering government, inefficient policies and wasted opportunities which characterised Mr Heath's administration, then he would be right to expect the electorate to take a very keen interest in the Conservative "inheritance" — but they won't vote for it.

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK ROBERTSON
(Secretary,
The Bruges Group, 1988-91),
36 Denbigh Street, SW1,
April 23.

From Mr Conor D. Burns

Sir, I believe that some critics of Mrs Thatcher's article in *Newsweek* (letters, April 23) have misunderstood her purpose. I am certain that her intention was to offer positive advice. It must be right that Mrs Thatcher can still point out that Mr Major cannot release the government from basic Thatcher principles as some of his anti-Thatcher ministers clearly urge him to do. It is a tribute to the policies that they win an election even in difficult times. Mr Major has no mandate to erase them.

Mrs Thatcher must continue to point out that there can be no consensus between right and wrong, success and failure, or freedom and socialism. It is also true to say that business knows more about investment than any trade minister. If the prime minister takes these points on board he will be as successful as his predecessor.

Yours faithfully,
CONOR D. BURNS
(Chairman,
Southampton University
Conservative Association,
Students' Union,
Highfield, Southampton).

From Mr Edward Celiz

Sir, The Thatcher book is now closed, but as Mr Major prepares to write his own let us never forget the enormous debt of gratitude we owe this remarkable woman.

Mrs Thatcher was the star of the Eighties. Her achievements were legendary, but the greatest of all was that she changed the Labour party and made it (almost) electable. Had there been no Mrs Thatcher there would have been no Labour reforms.

Yours etc.,
EDWARD CELIZ,
3 Lydecker Mews, Luton Road,
Harpenden, Hertfordshire,
April 20.

Weekend Money letters, page 24

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071) 782 5046.

Wary walking in the countryside

From Mr Michael Thompson

Sir, Once again Marion Shoard has painted a misleading picture of public access in the country in her article, "Getting back to the land" (April 18). It reeks of confrontation and incitement to trespass as if those sentiments were foremost in the minds of the hundreds of thousands of responsible people who take pleasure in walking and riding in the countryside today.

A rights-of-way field day took place in Cambridgeshire on April 16, when riders, ramblers, farmers, highway authority officials, local councillors and others came together in a spirit of good will to demonstrate how an out-of-date network of bridleways and footpaths has, with the co-operation of the parties concerned, been modernised, waymarked and re-routed for the benefit of all.

The event was a manifestation of the policies advocated in the recent Country Landowners Association report, "A better way forward", and much credit is due to the council officers and local Ramblers' Association representatives who have worked together so effectively to make the scheme a success.

There are miles upon miles of public rights of way over large areas of this country which are under-used and it is ridiculous to suggest that townfolk are bottled up in their back gardens and have nowhere to walk in rural Britain.

Much of the network is outdated and needs modernising but it is remarkable what improvements can be achieved when common sense and good will prevail over bitterness and mistrust. Peace in the countryside is what true country-loving people want — not emotive talk of battles, confrontation and trespass — and this is the message which your columns should be spreading.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL THOMPSON
(Chairman, Cambridge branch,
Country Landowners Association),
Sibbington House, Wansford,
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire,
April 21.

From Dr Owen Silver

Sir, Marion Shoard is unclear on the distinction between payment at point of entry and payment from the taxpayer in return for public access to the countryside.

Yours faithfully,
OWEN SILVER,
6 Shorehead, St Andrews, Fife,
April 19.

From Mr J. N. P. Watson

Sir, In her article demanding greater public access to the countryside Marion Shoard relates the incident of a demonstration to that end last September on Thurstone Moor in Yorkshire. This great moorland block, whose wild, open spaces contrast with the neat fields below, is home to sheep and snipe, meadow pipits, golden plovers and grouse. But the general public have no right to roam freely here.

If that moorland was open to one and all, however, those wild birds would mostly be scared away. Britain has quite sufficient national parks and public footpaths for the benefit of the general public, and far too few quiet, undisturbed places in which her fauna and flora may thrive.

Yours faithfully,
J. N. P. WATSON,
Fannett's Shipley,
Horsham, West Sussex,
April 21.

thus avoiding the risk of a series of conflicting celebrations.

Since the Church calendar sets aside October 6 as the date to commemorate Tyndale, we suggest that October 6, 1994, would be a suitable date to celebrate the 500th anniversary of his birth and that it would be fitting to set up a William Tyndale committee to work toward this end and in particular to decide the type of celebration most appropriate.

We would be grateful if any who wish to respond to this proposal would write to the address below.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT RUCIE,
TED HUGHES,
C. VERONICA WEDGWOOD,
PHYLLIS JAMES,
IRIS MURDOCH,
WILLIAM GOLDING,
William Tyndale Committee,
St Bride's Church,
Fleet Street, EC4,
April 24.

Saturday Review, page 20

From Mr Gordon Bowyer and others

Sir, The title of Kenneth Pearson's article in your Saturday Review (April 18) on Expo 1992 in Seville, "This time Britain gets it right", infers that Britain usually gets it wrong.

Nicholas Grimshaw's design for the 1992 British Pavilion looks very exciting. If this proves to be as good as Powell & Moya's brilliant and imaginative pavilion at Expo 1970 in Osaka, Japan, it will be very good indeed.

Kenneth Pearson may not have had the opportunity to see Expo 1970; but those of us who carried out design work in its interior can assure him that its innovative design did us all great credit and was an important contribution to the exhibition.

Yours faithfully,
GORDON BOWYER,
MICHAEL CAIN,
HUGH CASSON,
LESLIE GOODAY,
KENNETH GRANGE,
Bowyer Langlands Batchelor
(Chartered Architects & Designers),
Russell Chambers, The Piazza,
Covent Garden, WC2.

From Professor David Marsland

Sir, After all the moral ambivalence and pseudo-diplomatic timidity which has characterised most media accounts of the Yugoslav crisis, it was good to read Arne McEvoy's coherently argued condemnation of Serbian aggression ("Ambitions of war", April 22).

Alas, even she has not carried the analysis through fully. Only a genuine threat of full-scale military action by the democracies of the free world will bring an end to the Serbian regime's escalating campaign of terror.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID MARSLAND,
93 Beaufort Mansions,
Chelsea, SW3,
April 22.

Minister's views on fear of hell

From the Reverend Kendall S. Harmon

Sir, Conor Cruise O'Brien's arguments (article, April 22) against John Patten's call for greater fear of hell and damnation (report, April 17) may be summarised as follows: hell "is for the others", it does not work as a deterrent, and only those whose minds have been "steeped in traditional Christian theology are capable of reconciling the notion of infinite love with the practice of eternal punishment". Therefore, it should be left quietly alone.

Throughout his column he focuses his criticism on the idea of hell as "fire and brimstone" in spite of the fact that (a) Mr Patten did not specify the "damnation" which he hopes Britain will be taught and (b) a careful reading of the New Testament reveals that there are three images of hell and not one: punishment, destruction, and personal exclusion.

The most important function of hell in Christian thinking is the one which Dr O'Brien never discusses: hell serves as the alternative to salvation. Mr Patten recognised this by calling for the teaching of redemption and damnation.

The two belong together: to deny hell in any form is implicitly to repudiate the requirement of redemption. If men and women do not need to be saved then the central focus of Christianity, the cross, loses its primary significance and the Church loses her sense of urgency and moral seriousness.

Dr O'Brien would do well to think on these words from Søren Kierkegaard: "Do away with the terrors of eternity (either eternal happiness or eternal perdition) and the idea of an initiation of Christ is fantastic. Only the seriousness of eternity can compel and move a man to take such a daring decision and answer for his do."

Sincerely,
KENDALL S. HARMON,
24 Princes Street, Oxford,
April 23.

From Mr Colin Haycraft

Sir, In support of John Patten's theories of crime prevention could be cited the late G. M. Trevelyan's verdict on Swift (*An Autobiography and Other Essays*, 1949): "He was earnest in his religion, because he thought Yahoo could be restrained from crime only by the fear of God."

The next sentence adds for good measure: "Therefore he hated the infidel as much as he hated the Papist and the Dissenter."

Yours etc.,
COLIN HAYCRAFT
(Chairman,
Gerald Duckworth & Co.,
The Old Piano Factory,
48 Hoxton Square, N1,
April 24.

From Mr R. D. Hearn

Sir, I was brought up to believe that education was about the development of the body, mind and soul of the pupil. Our schools must have this three-dimensional approach or they are nothing.

It is good that the new Secretary of State for Education is raising the level of debate by implying that schools could be undernourishing the spiritual needs of their charges.

Yours faithfully,
R. D. HEARN
(Head of politics),
Haileybury,
Hertford,
April 22.

From the Reverend David Dale

Sir, I think it might just be possible for me to persuade my brother clergy not to say silly things about politics and economics if someone can persuade ministers of the Crown not to say silly things about theology and education.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID DALE
(Chaplain, Reading School),
48 Cardinal Close,
Caversham, Reading, Berkshire,
April 18.

Contract bridge

From the Reverend W. R. Hanford

Sir, My fellow-Welshmen may indeed be glad to learn that they are about to be able to get into England free (report, April 14), and the English may well lament that it will now cost them £2.80 to get out via the Severn Bridge.

However, before too much Celtic euphoria is aroused, it might be worth remembering that they will still be collecting the money on the English side.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD HANFORD,
Ewell Vicarage,
Church Street,
Ewell, Epsom, Surrey.

Eastern promise

From Lord Holme of Cheltenham

Sir, Some lines upon the appointment of Chris Patten, with grateful acknowledgement to Hilaire Belloc: We had intended you to be The next Prime Minister but three: The stocks were sold; the Press was squared;

The Middle Class was quite prepared. But, as it is, Bath can't be wrong. Go out as Governor of Hong Kong! Yours faithfully,
HOLME,
14 Soho Square, W1.



AP 25.92 SPLITTING ASUNDER

Neil Kinnock's resignation as leader of the Labour party is forcing it to face unpleasant truths about itself. The machinery for replacing him, as for replacing his departing deputy, Roy Hattersley, still gives the greatest weight to Labour's affiliated trade unions. That may fairly symbolise Labour's origins. But if it also represents its future, the party's fate will be grim.

Trade unionism is now too much of a sectional interest to remain the basis of a party aspiring to national government. In 1992 the British electorate passed what is doubtless its definitive judgement on the party-union partnership traditionally at the heart of the Labour movement. The leadership contest has offered the party the opportunity to respond to this judgment. Even John Smith, early front-runner by virtue of the support of several union leaders, has noted the way the wind is blowing and abandoned his agnosticism on at least this aspect of the union relationship.

Mr Smith said on Thursday that the leadership election system must be changed, joining his voice to that of the other leadership and deputy leadership contenders. He proposed the eventual elimination of the unions' role in electing the party leader. With the present leadership election taking place under the existing system, he urged the unions — of their own accord — to ballot their members before deciding how to cast their votes. Despite enjoying their support, Mr Smith no longer wants Mr Kinnock's chair simply as the result of a visible stitch-up by union leaders using their block votes.

The Labour leadership electoral college is divided into three, with 30 per cent of the votes each going to the parliamentary party and constituency parties (which under existing rules must ballot their members), and the remaining 40 per cent belonging to the trade union sector. Union executives need not even "consult" their members —

unionspeak for a head-office circular to branch secretaries — let alone ballot them.

Thus the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, which controls nearly 5 per cent of that 40 per cent, has rejected a ballot of its million-plus members because of the cost, more than £100,000. The GMB general union, of similar size, will conduct a proper ballot. Others are waiting for a consensus to emerge in the trade union movement, or for guidance from the party.

Evidently the recent low profile of the trade unions in Labour's affairs was a self-denying ordinance for electoral purposes only. If the Kinnock reform of Labour's internal balance of power is to be made permanent, union leaders will have to offer something more credible than volunteering to duck out of sight whenever the voters look their way. This is a good time, therefore, for the party to be asking itself yet more painful questions, and asking them specifically of the candidates for the Kinnock/Hattersley succession.

If there is something wrong with trade unions having a 40 per cent say in the Labour leadership, surely there must be something even more wrong in giving the unions virtually 90 per cent of the votes at Labour's annual conference? If that too is wrong, what about the party's reliance on the unions to finance it? And what of the fact that a score of members of the shadow cabinet have union sponsorship, a relationship that sounds inexplicable and sinister to many voters?

The great corporations that support the Tory party financially seek no constitutional role in that party's affairs. Total divorce between the unions and Labour may not be possible nor even desirable. But they can no longer share house; they must now live at least semi-detached. In the interests of the Labour party and of a wider British democracy, the various candidates for leader and deputy should declare how bold they are prepared to be. And may the boldest win.

FUN WITH PLANNING

The new "department of fun" is starting to furrow as many high brows as it is delighting. Ideas born in the heat of electoral battle are rarely good ones. Lumping together all the tastier titbits from existing ministries under the ebullient David Mellor and giving him the grandiloquent cabinet title of Secretary of State was meant to have artists, sportsmen, conservationists and broadcasters purring with pleasure. Letters in *The Times* this week have begun to ask just how much thought went into this change.

The oldest maxim in Whitehall is better to be a small item in a large budget than a large item in a small one — the gearing is higher. When the arts were buried as a mere "office" inside the education department, its officials could always find an education elephant underspending by 1 per cent towards the end of the financial year — 1 per cent that, transferred, meant an extra 20 per cent for a distressed museum or opera company. The same went for historic-buildings grants inside the environment department. But in a time of constrained post-election spending, "fun" might find itself suddenly farther down the queue than ever before and with no "virement" underspends to cushion it.

Even more problematic are the clashes emerging between the new ministry and those from whom it is taking functions. Mr Mellor has taken from the environment department historic buildings, their listing, aiding and preservation. Pleasure domes aplenty are within his remit, from Hampton Court Palace to the humblest grade two cottage. But the real threat to Britain's historic buildings comes not from lack of public money but from ministerial decisions under the planning legislation.

Such decisions include appeals on applica-

tions to alter or destroy listed buildings and final judgments on great cases such as Liverpool's Lyceum, Paternoster Square and the Palumbo block in the City of London. Like the now-threatened countryside, historic buildings and conservation areas are most vulnerable not to decay but to whatever planning policy prevails at the environment department. Yet it is hardly conceivable that this department will cede to Mr Mellor the right to make planning decisions, big or small, as a result of public enquiries.

The most Mr Mellor will be able to do is lobby. This means that agencies such as English Heritage, set up in 1983 to implement government conservation policy, must work to two masters if its conservation job is to have any meaning. This has all the makings of a Whitehall dog's dinner.

The theory of a ministry of culture is that it will be better able to fight its clients' corner interdepartmentally than intradepartmentally. Mr Mellor would thus reassure the arts by being seen in slanging matches with fellow ministers on the steps of Downing Street. He would threaten to walk out of cabinet rather than see Stonehenge encircled by a housing estate or the BBC forced to close two radio channels.

Heads of big departments used to like fussing over the more famous and appealing clients in their portfolios; liked getting credit for standing up for them, perhaps saving them, being caught in the penumbra of their glow. Mr Mellor has stolen every penumbra going. They are thus the more likely to fight him. And Mr Mellor, who would surely like a more substantial job soon, will be the less likely to fight them back. His clients may be cheering his new citadel, but they will soon turn to assault.

MICHAEL GREEN

CHARLES GINSBURG

In 1956, Ampex introduced the world's first practical video recorder, and the tape to go with it — and the era of all-live television was over. In 1990 Ginsburg was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame.

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL SIR HUGH CONSTANTINE



He moved at the beginning of the war with the Old Vic to Burnley and stage managed its CEMA tour, including a production of *Trippy* with Ernest Milton and Sonia Dresdel in 1940.

In January 1941 he joined the army and on his first 48-hour leave pass went to London. During the first night of his stay he was the victim of a German bomb and narrowly escaped death. After a considerable time in hospital, he was invalided out of the army.

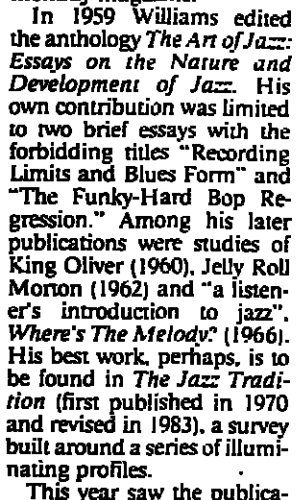
He was eventually fit enough to take

He was responsible for some 300 of Tennent's productions in the coming years. These included *The Visit* which starred the Lunts; *Oklahoma!*; *West Side Story*; *My Fair Lady*; *The Skin of Our Teeth* with Vivien Leigh and Cecil Parker, directed by Laurence Olivier; the first British production of *A View From A Bridge*; Peter Brook's *Hamlet*; and a whole range of productions in London and abroad.

Ian Dow retired in 1980 and moved with his second wife Margaret Gillies, whom he had married in 1968, to South Creake in Norfolk.

He was an active member of the Lords Taverners, the Stage Golfing Society and the Green Room Club.

He leaves his widow, Margaret, and a daughter.

MARTIN WILLIAMS

His tenure at the Smithsonian was not entirely free of criticism. There was a feeling among musicians and fellow writers that he had become increasingly aloof and opinionated. Nevertheless he was responsible for many important actions. Along with the author and composer Gunther Schuller, he supervised long-awaited annotations of the Institution's jazz recordings. To emphasize that jazz was a living art form, he collaborated with the pianist and arranger Bob Wilber on a series of concerts of vintage music. From these emerged the Smithsonian Jazz Repertory Company, a group led by Wilber which presented award-winning programs spanning the history of Black music. Other projects of the Smithsonian and John Coltrane

APPRECIATION

**Col Maurice
Buckmaster**

architect of the twinning between the towns of Montargis (Loiret) and Crowborough (East Sussex). Through his office as president he fostered mutual understanding at all levels, encouraging many on both sides of the Channel, who may formerly have been suspicious and intolerant of each other, to enjoy each other's company, life-style and language.

He was greatly loved and a true European.

Sue Mayo

April 25 **ON THIS DAY** 1967

PLAY ABOUT CHURCHILL REJECTED

Sir Laurence Olivier and Mr. Tynan met Herr Hochhuth in London last weekend and suggested a number of alterations.

The board's discussion yesterday was their first on the complete text. They were told that changes were to be made by the author - who left London earlier yesterday without knowing their decision.

Sir Laurence Olivier told *The Times* that he was extremely unhappy about the verdict. He had asked the board for time to see whether the balance of the play could be adjusted. The board, he thought, had taken a hasty decision.

Mr. Tynan said he thought the board had shown a tragic failure of vision and a remarkable lack of confidence in the judgment of an artistic director who had succeeded in establishing the National Theatre as one of the major companies of the world.

The board's decision, Mr. Tynan went on, brought into question the whole matter of the separation of powers within a subsidized theatre. It was his view that, although the board should lay down the broad lines of policy, the choice of actors and plays had to remain the prerogative of the artistic director.

Sir Laurence had triumphantly carried out his mandate. Only the other day, for example, his support of a completely unknown playwright, Mr. Tom Stoppard, had been hailed as a landmark in theatrical history. And this, Mr. Tynan added, was the moment the board had chosen to present what clearly amounted to a vote of no confidence in him.

"I believe," Mr. Tynan went on, "that Rolf Hochhuth's play belongs to the ancient, classical, integral theatre of high debate on great matters of public concern." He believed that a national theatre should restore drama to that kind of eminence.

Lord Chandos, chairman of the board, said: "A play which imputes the murder of General Mikojorsky to Sir Winston Churchill at the instigation of Lord Berchworth is not suitable for the National Theatre." (General Mikojorsky, Polish Prime Minister, died in an air crash in 1943.)

He said that the first script contained this imputation. The author was given plenty of time to alter it and the final script delivered some time later, still contained the imputation.

"All matters of artistic importance naturally are matters of the director. Wide national policy is a matter for the state."

Church services tomorrow

First Sunday after Easter

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

ST CUTHBERT'S, Philadelphia Gardens
 SW: 100 E 111 S & 34th (Gibbons in P.
ST GEORGE'S, Bloomsbury, WC: 10
 E 40th 630 EP, Ft. M. Day.
ST JOHN'S, 115 E. 40th. Square, W: 1
 830 HC, 115 E. 40th. M: 115 E. 40th.
ST JULIE-IN-THE-MOZART, in C. The
 High St. SW: 115 E 12 C 111 NP. R: 8
 115 E 12 C 111 NP. R: 8
ST JAMES'S, Maxwell Hill, MIP: 8 W
 & 630 HC 1030 Family Service.
ST JAMES'S, Piccadilly, W: 830 HC
 1030 Family Service.
ST JAMES'S, Sussex Garden, W: 830
 HC 1030 5 S. R: 8 Gateway. 315
 E 1030 5 S. R: 8 Gateway. 315
 E 1030 5 S. R: 8 Gateway. 315
ST JOHN'S, Hyde Park Corner, W: 8
 1030 5 S. R: 8 Gateway. 315
 R: 8 Gateway. 315
ST JOHN'S WOOD, Church, NW: 8
 1030 5 S. R: 8 Gateway. 315
 R: 8 Gateway. 315
ST LUKES, Calcutta, SW: 8 1030
 5 S. R: 8 Gateway. 315
 R: 8 Gateway. 315
ST MARK'S, Regents Park, NW: 8
 1030 5 S. R: 8 Gateway. 315
 R: 8 Gateway. 315
ST MARGARET'S, Westminster, SW: 11
 1030 5 S. R: 8 Gateway. 315
 R: 8 Gateway. 315
ST MARIE-ROSE, Marlborough Road,
 W: 8 1030 5 S. R: 8 Gateway. 315
 R: 8 Gateway. 315
ST MARTIN-LE-STANG (WINS Church),
 Strand W: 11 Stang Communion, R:

SAC MATTHEW'S, Great Pines St. SW1: 8
SAC **MATTHEW'S**, Music (Murray), Rev M
SAC **MICHAEL'S**, Chester Square, SW1:
1 HC 7 Informal ES at Grey Court
SAC **MICHAEL'S**, Lower School and ES SAC
St James the Less, Vauxhall Bridge
SIR MICHAEL'S, Cornhill, EC3A: 1
Choral M. rise up, love your neighbor
SAC **MICHAEL'S**, 60 Whitechapel Road,
Brk. Green is the Love (Dunsley); 12 HC
FAC **PAUL'S**, Ostow Square, SW7: 10-3
Family MC 6-30 Informal Service.
SAC **PAUL'S**, Winton Place, SW1: 8 a
9 p MC 6-30 Informal Service.
Service In D House, Christ rising again
(Vivellian), Mass dies (Myrd), Rev N
SAC **PETER'S**, Eaton Square, SW7: 8-15
HC 10 Family Mass 11 AM. If d
MC 6-30 With Double Chant, Wood
In F.
SAC **SIMON ZELOTES**, Milner Street,
Eaton Square, SW7: 8-15
SAC **STEPHEN'S**, Gloucester Road, SW7:
9-14; 11-15 Ch M, Missa brevis
(Pavane), Sing of New Jerusalem
(Stanford)
SAC **VEDAST'S**, Port Land, EEC: 11-15
MC Mass, Rev R Avon.

SAC COLIMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,
Portland, Port Glasgow, 11 Rev J
McIndoe: 3 HC Rev J McIndoe 6-30
Rev A Cairns.
SAC JOHN'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,
Llandudno, Cvent Garden, SW2: 11-15
6-30 Rev S Hood.
SAC **JAMES' CHURCH**, Warwick Street,
SW1: 11 Missa (nova massa) (Vladana),
Slavi deus (Vladislava). Love is some
thing new.
CHURCH OF OUR LADY, Union Grove,
St John's Wood: 10-15 Sing Latin in
English.
SAC **JOHN'S CHURCH**, 10-15 Sing Latin
in English.
Don't translate! Harvest.
FARM STREET, W1: 7-30, 6-30, 10-15
Informal Service.
SAC **KATHARINE'S**, 10-15 Missa
brevis (Hov), Evaluate just (Vladana),
The Lord is my strength (Hov).

THE ORATORY, Brimpton Road, SW7:

[illegible]

boarded sharp comment from Sir Laurence Olivier, director of the theatre, and Mr. Kenneth Tynan, literary manager.

The play, on which the board took no opinion last autumn, was inspired by the writing of D. H. Lawrence, and set in Dresden. The Board felt that some characters, especially Sir Winston Churchill and Lord Cherwell, were grossly maligned.

Sir Laurence Olivier and Mr. Tynan met Herr Hochhuth in London last weekend and suggested a number of alterations, all of which he accepted.

The board's disapproval yesterday was their first on the complete text. They were told that changes were to be made by the author - who left London earlier yesterday without knowing their decision.

Sir Laurence Olivier told *The Times* that he was extremely unhappy about the verdict. He had asked the board for time to see whether the balance of the play could be adjusted. The board, he thought, had taken a hasty decision.

He added that Herr Hochhuth had been most co-operative about suggestions for altering the play: he was a scrupulously fair-minded,

Mr. Tarnowski, Polish Prime Minister, died in an air crash in 1943).

GEC blamed for channel tunnel delay

By MICHAEL DYNES, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

RESPONSIBILITY for the delay in starting the full Channel tunnel service lies with Lord Weinstock, GEC's managing director, and GEC-Alsthom, the Anglo-French company responsible for building the Channel tunnel, Sir Alastair Morton, chief executive of Eurotunnel, said yesterday.

Speaking on BBC Radio, Sir Alastair attempted to deflect attention from Eurotunnel's financial and construction difficulties by laying the blame for delays in the provision of the full service

between London, Paris and Brussels at the doorstep of "Lord Weinstock and his French colleagues".

His accusation coincided with the publication of Eurotunnel's annual report, which warned of further delays in the opening of the Channel tunnel because of disputes over the cost of construction work, stringent safety requirements and the late delivery of rolling stock.

Eurotunnel announced in February that it would miss its scheduled opening date of June 15, 1993, by at least three months, while a full service was unlikely until the summer of 1994. The opening of the £9 billion tunnel may now have to be delayed for a second time, Eurotunnel has disclosed.

Three services will be available when the tunnel opens, including Eurotunnel's car and lorry shuttle service, the international passenger service provided by British, Belgian and French railways, and the new freight services between Britain and some 20 continental destinations.

Responding to a question about when the full Channel tunnel service would be ready, Sir Alastair said: "I'm afraid Lord Weinstock and his French colleagues in GEC-Alsthom are going to be late with British Rail and SNCF's [French railways] trains."

GEC-Alsthom, which won contracts together worth £500 to build trains for the inter-capital service and British services north of London, will not be able to meet the original delivery deadline.

During a meeting between ministers and company officials towards the end of last year, it is understood that Malcolm Rifkind, the former transport secretary, told Lord Weinstock that the anticipated rolling stock delivery delays could not be tolerated.

Mujahidin agree to share power

Continued from page 1

replaced by a government headed by Burhanuddin Rabbani, the leader of Jamiat-i-Islami, as president. Mr Masoud will hold the powerful post of defence minister.

The accord will help to avert a war among the resistance forces vying for power in Kabul. It came as a complete surprise as earlier Mr Hekmatyar had refused to share power with Mr Masoud, his bitter rival, and had moved his forces to surround the Afghan capital. He had also threatened to take power by force if the Kabul administration did not surrender by April 26.

However, observers and diplomats here doubt whether this arrangement would work. It seems unlikely that the squabbling among the Mujahidin leaders would end and that they would form a viable and stable government. In fact, most political parties in Afghanistan might not accept Mr Hekmatyar in any role.

Prisoners freed, page 10

Share offer, page 17



Goya rediscovered: this 1783 portrait of a celebrated Spanish beauty has been authenticated as a Goya and is expected to fetch up to £1 million at Christie's next month (John Shaw writes). The study, measuring 26 1/2 in by 19 1/2 in, is of Doña Maria Teresa de Vallabona y Rozas, wife of the Infante Don Luis de Borbón, Francis-

co de Goya's first big patron. "Goya and the sitter came from the same town and they obviously hit it off together because she looks wonderful," Charles Beddington, head of Christie's Old Masters department, said. The painting was last recorded at the palace of Boadilla del Monte, 15 kilometres from Madrid. "It came

to be regarded as a copy in the 19th century," Mr Beddington said. "That may be because of a misunderstanding of something written on the back, 'C. Del Goya', which could be read as 'Copy Del Goya'." It came to England in 1980. "It was filthy dirty but, when it was cleaned and inspected, it became obvious that it was an original."

Universe may still hide a dark secret

Continued from page 1

matter from which the universe evolved. The finding of disturbances in microwave signals from the edge of the universe helps to explain how a uniform distribution of matter from the big bang congealed into stars and galaxies. To astronomers believing current cosmological theories, the finding is an enormous relief, for, without it, they would have been forced back to the drawing board. Sir Martin Rees, professor of astrophysics at Cambridge, said: "It's important that the fluctuations exist because if the experiment had not found any, researchers would have worried whether they were working along the right lines."

What, however, happened before the ripples? Was anything around before the big bang, and if not, how did it come about? Even with its secrets unveiled, the universe seems to have left a little room for belief in God.

While solving one mystery, the discovery focuses attention on another. The satellite results provide supporting evidence for the "inflationary cosmology" theory that the structure and behaviour of

the universe were determined by minute fluctuations occurring when it was less than a trillionth of a second old. However, the amount of gravity provided by these fluctuations was certainly inadequate to draw together the galaxies and clusters of galaxies. That process can be explained only if there is much more matter in the universe than we can detect.

The results support the idea that this so-called "cold dark matter" exists, but take us no nearer understanding it. If cold dark matter is there, shaping the universe, it is proving hard to find. Astronomers speculate that it may be in the form of Jupiter-sized stars too dim to see, black holes a million times the mass of the sun, or particles that pass through matter leaving scarcely a trace.

As Arnold Wolfendale, Astronomer Royal, writes in today's *Times*, finding cold dark matter will be as important, or perhaps even more important, than this week's results. Astronomers should save a few superlatives.

The Astronomer Royal writes about the origins of the universe, page 12

Mexicans seek cause of city explosion

Continued from page 1

parts salesman now sleeping with hundreds of others on fold-away beds in the classrooms of a nearby school.

The city's mayor, fire chief and head of the sanitation department, resigned yesterday following charges that the authorities had ignored warnings of a dangerous gas build-up in the sewer system.

President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, of Mexico, ordered an investigation. "If it can show La Central is responsible for the explosion, it can avoid responsibility," said a woman scavenging for her belongings. "If it can show La Central is responsible for the explosion, it can avoid responsibility." There were also remarkable escape stories. A baby was thrown from a car on to the top of a house and survived. Susana Anzures survived her car describing a somersault and landing nose-first.

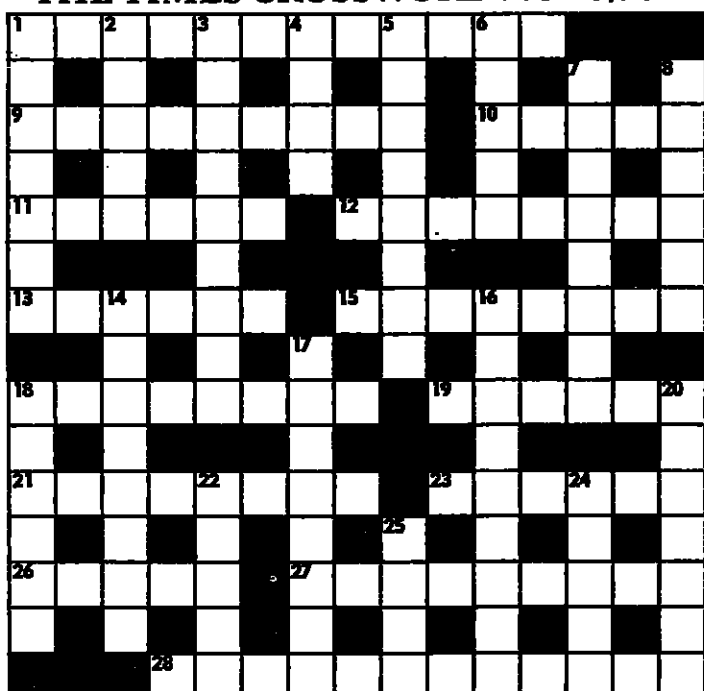
leak could have caused the explosions.

Few believe Pemex's accusation against La Central. "I think Pemex are the guilty ones. La Central is not big enough. How could they produce so much gas to produce this?" asked Mario Alonso Amador, a 22-year-old student.

"The government is manipulating the information," said a woman scavenging for her belongings. "If it can show La Central is responsible for the explosion, it can avoid responsibility."

There were also remarkable escape stories. A baby was thrown from a car on to the top of a house and survived. Susana Anzures survived her car describing a somersault and landing nose-first.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 18,902



- ACROSS**
- Savory spotless for the summer visitor (7,5).
 - Turkey on a plate, edible, may be cured (9).
 - Thalia, for example, amazing sort going by air (5).
 - Whaling, went to ground in Greenland initially (6).
 - For the city, Lincoln Road eve shorter (8).
 - Butterfly aircraft (6).
 - Melancholy cry of stag one can pick up in the woods (8).
 - Lehar, possibly, boring in the setting of bars? (8).
 - Gamble to drink, swallowing head of stout (4-2).
 - Blueets fluttering for Burnthorne's bride, say (8).
 - Metaphysical poet one left out, for a wonder (6).
 - The doddards, a bit of a rotten nuisance (5).
 - Gadabout said to be courteous about teatime (9).
 - Foreign ladies in C.C.? It would be like bringing about the end of cricket (12).
- DOWN**
- Baseball player, susceptible to colds and the like? (7).
 - Loop around long fuse (5).
 - How Anne Brontë, otherwise, might respond to signal? (5,4).
 - European river in which the Spanish survive (4).
 - A blackener of souls, they say, fit to turn up in Hades? (8).
 - Dangerous sort of night-burner? (5).
 - Interest reduced? How irresponsible (8).
 - Officer reputed to be a bit of a nut (6).
 - Dying to get old wife into burial-tomb? (8).
 - Narcissus, a cat in mutineers' ship capsize (9).
 - Introductory part in which poor glue comes unstuck (8).
 - Hospital with dreadful tales of the meat-loaf? (6).
 - Speech sound? Yes, initially (7).
 - As a king, he was bound to go round (5).
 - One piece of food for six-plus (5).
 - Blow-out in apartment (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 18,901

PAINTER MASSAGE
A N H E A L A N V
R I P L E P E N T A N G L E
A U R O P E A N E
P E R I M E T E R S O L V E
E A T A T S
T R A M P B A N D I T C O O T
T A C O V
T R E A T M E N T K N E A D
A C C O R D I O N
N E V E R B R I N G I N G
K I N O T O A A
A T T R I B U T E R A K E D
R A T N T M E E
D E L A Y E D Y E A R N E D

Solution to Puzzle No 18,896

T I R A D E I D O L A T E R
A U D A Q O I
S I G H T E R E A S M U S
M A C A A N B K
A L L T H E T I M E P O N Y
N I T Y B E T L
S P A R R O W O P E R A T E
E A S H E A L A N V
A S P H A L T T O P M A S T
R T E O V R
A N O N P R O P E R N A M E
M S L S A I R M
I M P E A C H R O S S I N I
S E R E N A D E A S C E N S

PARKER DUOFOLD A prize of a superb Parker Duofold International Fountain Pen, with an 18 carat gold nib and fully guaranteed for the lifetime of the original owner will be given for the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address

A daily safari through the language jungle. Which definitions are correct?
By Philip Howard

- POZZY-WALLAH**
a. A jazz-lover
b. A post-room orderly
c. Spick and span
AGMIMATE
a. To flourish aggression
b. Stunched together
c. Eat by snail
PIOUPIOU
a. The Hawaiian cuckoo
b. An infantry soldier
c. Crossroads of Singapore
MISOGYNIST
a. Hating tobacco smoke
b. A cabaret's assistant
c. An itinerant Jeweller

Answers on page 14

For the latest AA traffic and roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0836 401 followed by the appropriate code.

London & SE	731
C. London (within N & S Circs.)	732
M-ways/roads M4-M11	733
M-ways/roads M1-Dartford T	734
M-ways/roads Dartford T-M25	735
M25 London Orbital only	736
National	
National motorways	737
West Country	738
Wales	739
Wales & S. Wales	740
East Angles	741
North-west England	742
North-east England	743
Scotland	744
Northern Ireland	745

AA Roadwatch is charged at 36p per minute (cheap rate) and 48p per minute at all other times.

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0891 500 followed by the appropriate code.

Greater London	701
Kent, Surrey, Sussex	702
Dorset, Dorset & IOW	703
Devon & Cornwall	704
Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Somerset	705
Berkshire, Bucks, Oxford	706
Beds, Herts & Essex	707
Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambs	708
West Mid & 8th Glam & Gwent	709
Stroud, Herefords & Wores	710
Central Midlands	711
East Midlands	712
Lincoln & Humberside	713
Dyfed & Powys	714
Gwynedd & Chwyd	715
NW England	716
W & S Yorks & Dales	717
NE England	718
Cumbria & Lake District	719
SW Scotland	720
W Central Scotland	721
Edin & Fife/Lothian & Borders	722
E Central Scotland	723
Grampian & E Highlands	724
NW Scotland	725
Caithness, Orkney & Shetland	726
N Ireland	727

Weathercall is charged at 36p per minute (cheap rate) and 48p per minute at all other times.

Concise crossword, page 16
Weekend Times section

The winners of last Saturday's competition are: R T Newbery, Barnfield, Epping, Essex; V Jones, Allgem. Park, London SE21; A Havering, Market Place, Camwood, N Yorks; S V Straker, Manor Rd, Reigate, Surrey; R L Brown, Brumham Gdns, London SW5.

Apart from coastal showers in the north and west, most areas will start dry with sunny intervals. Showers, heavy and thundery at times, will develop this morning, especially over Northern Ireland, Wales and western counties of England and Scotland. Over eastern Britain, the showers will be lighter. This evening, showers inland will die out, but it will be windy. Outlook: more general rain will cross Britain tomorrow, with Monday being showery. Breezy.

MIDDAY: b-bunder; d-dizzle; f-fog; s-sun; si-sleet; sr-snow; f-wr-fair; o-out; r-rain		Sun		Rain		Max	
Abertawe	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Abertawe	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Abertawe	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Abertawe	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Abertawe	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Abertawe	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Abertawe	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Abertawe	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Abertawe	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Abertawe	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

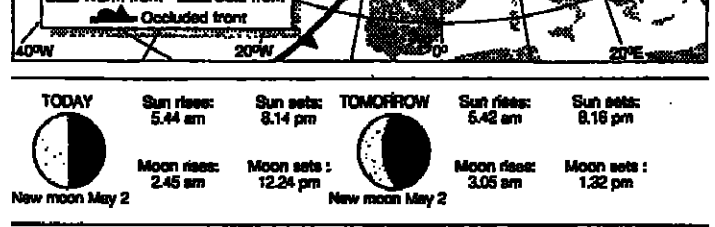
Australia S	2,415	2,415
Austria S	2,415	2,415
Belgium Fr	2,415	2,415
Canada S	2,415	2,415
Denmark S	2,415	2,415
Finland S	2,415	2,415
France Fr	2,415	2,415
Germany S	2,415	2,415
Greece S	2,415	2,415
Hong Kong S	2,415	2,415
Ireland S	2,415	2,415
Italy S	2,415	2,415
Netherlands S	2,415	2,415
Norway S	2,415	2,415
Portugal S	2,415	2,415
South Africa S	2,415	2,415
Spain S	2,415	2,415
Sweden S	2,415	2,415
Switzerland S	2,415	2,415
Turkey S	2,415	2,415
USA S	2,415	2,415
Yugoslavia S	2,415	2,415

These are Thursday's figures

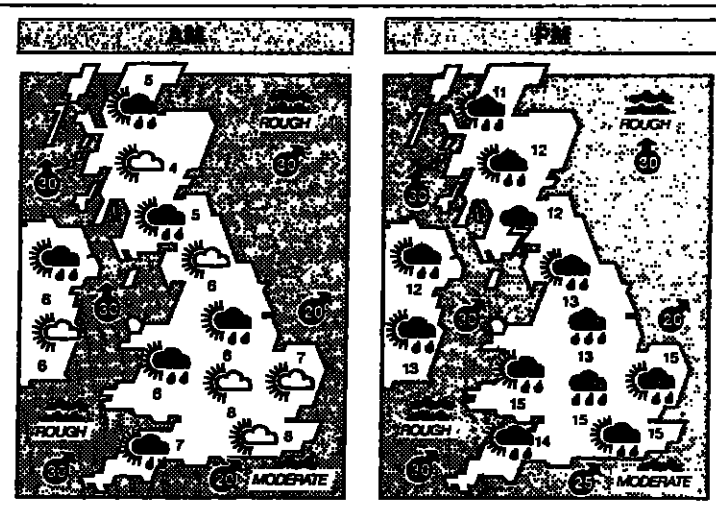
Thursday: Highest day temp: Manston, Kent, 16C (61F). Lowest day temp: Llandudno, 7C (45F). Highest rainfall: Machinair, 0.39in. Highest sunshine: Ventnor, Isle of Wight, 10.1hr.

Yesterday: Temp: max 8m to 9m, 11C (52F); min 5m to 6m, 9C (48F). Rain: 24hr to 9m, 0.09in. Sun: 24hr to 9m, 0.5hr.

Yesterday: Temp: max 8m to 9m, 11C (52F); min 5m to 6m, 9C (48F). Rain: 24hr to 9m, 0.37in. Sun: 24hr to 9m, 1.8hr.



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Information supplied by Met Office

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BUSINESS NEWS 17-20,25,26
WEEKEND MONEY 21-24
SPORT 27-32

SATURDAY APRIL 25 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL

WEEKEND
MONEY

Profile

When James Wolfensohn left Australia for America, he had to hitch a ride with the air force and finance his way through Harvard by running the college laundry. Now a multi-millionaire, he advises on such top-flight projects as the rescue of Olympia & York and Hong-kong and Shanghai's Midland bid. Page 19

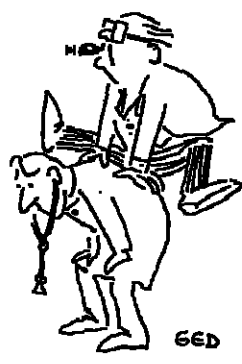


Line of action

A plan by the Halifax Building Society to insure directors and officers against litigation is likely to meet strong resistance from some members at next month's annual meeting. Page 22

Bonus misery

Bonuses on with-profits endowment policies are likely to remain lower in the nineties than they were in the eighties because of ERM inflation curbs, a new report suggests. Page 23



Letters Page 24

High technology

Technology stocks are nudging the top of the investment performance tables for the first time since 1983. The recovery is underpinned by an 18 months' rally in American technology stocks, which some investors predict will continue, despite a fall in the shares over the past month. Michael Bourne, of Prolife Asset Management, says the worldwide recession means investing in technology shares is now a good alternative to blue chip stocks. Page 23



Direct saving

Householders may now save up to 20 per cent on contents insurance and as much as 15 per cent on buildings insurance by buying the cover directly from General Accident. Page 23



Health hazard

Steepest premium rises for company health schemes mean that employees are often having to accept lower levels of cover, especially in relation to pre-existing conditions. Page 22

Cost factor

Next week's comprehensive review of the funding of the Investors' Compensation Scheme is likely to result in higher premiums, or larger deductions from investments. Page 21

Times
writer
wins
award

NEIL BENNETT, banking correspondent of *The Times*, has been named junior financial journalist of the year in the 1991 Wincott Foundation awards for financial journalism.

Bennett, 26, joined *The Times* in 1989 from *Investors Chronicle*. His award was presented for general excellence in City reporting, with particular reference to *The Times*' coverage of the BCCI



Bennett: winner

banking collapse. He received his award from Nigel Lawson, the former Chancellor, at a presentation lunch in the City.

Senior financial journalist of the year was David Lascelles of the *Financial Times*, and business journalist of the year was the *Daily Telegraph*.

In broadcasting, BBC2's *Money Programme* was named business programme of the year, with Paul Neill of *Channel 4 News* as business journalist of the year. A special commendation went to BBC1's *Troubleshooter*.

Diary, page 12

THE POUND

US dollar 1.7715 (+0.0075)
German mark 2.9256 (-0.0039)
Exchange index 92.3 (+0.1)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 2072.5 (+29.8)
FT-SE 100 2643.0 (+33.2)
New York Dow Jones 3343.69 (-4.92)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 17542.45 (+140.40)

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base 10 1/4%
3-month interbank 10 1/4-10 1/2%
3-month eligible bills 10 1/4-10 1/2%
US: Prime Rate 6 1/4%
Federal Funds 3 1/4%
3-month Treasury Bills 3.68-3.67%
30-year bonds 9 5/8-9 5/8%

CURRENCIES

London: New York
£ \$1.7724
£ DM2.9244
£ Sfr2.7153
£ FF6.8888
£ Yen239.58
ECU £0.70027
£ ECU1.42682
London forex market close

GOLD

London Fixing:
AM \$336.55 pm \$336.55
close \$336.15-336.65 (£189.80-190.10)
New York:
Comex \$336.75-337.25

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (May) \$19.00 bbl (\$18.80)

RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 136.7 March (1987=100)
* Denotes midday trading price

Eurotunnel rights issue before passenger trains run would be 'last resort'

Morton offers
shares to ease
tunnel dispute

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

EUROTUNNEL may issue shares to Transmanche Link (TML), the contracting consortium, in part settlement of £1.2 billion of outstanding claims, but will do all in its power to avoid a rights issue before the tunnel has opened, Sir Alastair Morton, chief executive, said.

His effort to reassure shareholders came as pressures on the Channel tunnel developer, arising from cost overruns and delays, continued to mount. Sir Alastair reaffirmed his belief that the rail tunnel between Britain and France could open on September 15 next year, three months late, with goodwill from contractors. But a full passenger service will not be available until mid-1994.

Because of that delay in passenger revenues, Eurotunnel expects to spend an additional £730 million on the project, and on interest payments, before the tunnel opens, bringing the total cost to £8.1 billion.

Sir Alastair said Eurotunnel would try to avoid any further cash calls, at least until passenger carrying operations had begun. Graham Corbett, the company finance director, said: "We have sufficient funds to opening if that can be achieved by the fourth quarter of 1993." Thereafter, there was "some uncertainty

as to whether additional funds will or will not be required."

In an effort to ease the funding pressures and to resolve a nine-month battle with TML, Eurotunnel had offered to issue shares to TML's owner companies, Sir Alastair said. "We may discuss it again as part of the settlement arrangements." Shareholder approval would be sought before any shares issue, which would, "if possible", account for less than 5 per cent, but "could not" be more than 15 per cent, of the company's total equity.

Eurotunnel is taking legal steps in response to the failure to maintain progress on time and to cost. In a presentation yesterday, alongside the company's preliminary announcement of results for the year to end-December, Sir Alastair confirmed that Eurotunnel is seeking to settle its dispute with TML by binding arbitration at the International Chamber of Commerce in Brussels.

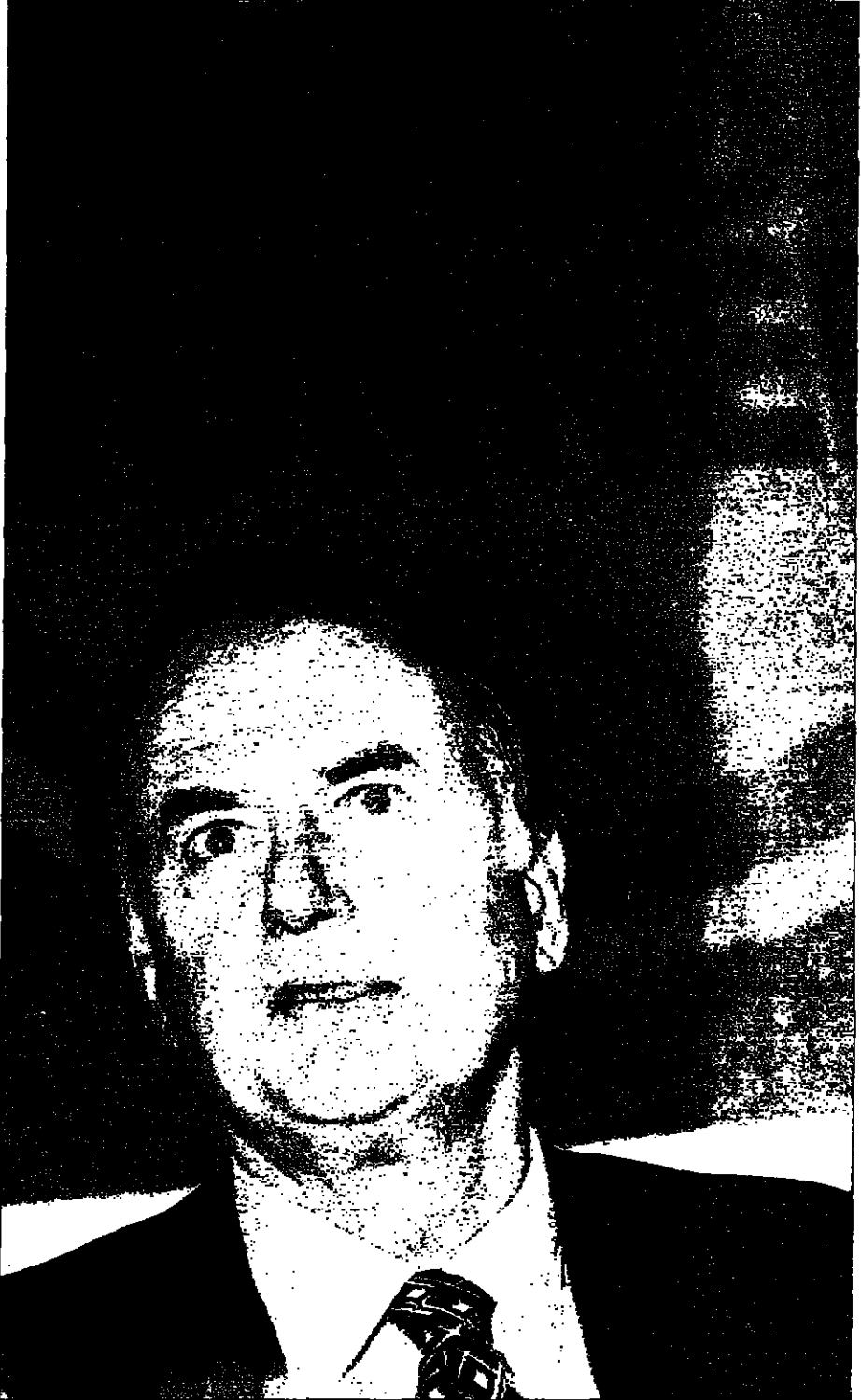
Eurotunnel's move amounts to a rejection of earlier findings from the disputes panel — established under terms of the construction contract — that were intended to settle claims from the contractors for most additional payments. The panel found largely in favour of TML and ordered Eurotunnel to make additional in-

terim payments of £50 million a month, starting at the end of next week, until a full settlement was agreed.

Eurotunnel denies that the judgment is binding. Arbitration, which could take several years, is intended as a backstop to talks with leaders of the five British and five French companies that jointly own TML. However, a TML spokesman said the contractors were convinced the disputes panel finding is legally enforceable. TML intends to take action if interim payments are not increased threefold. However, talks continue.

Eurotunnel, which is in technical default on its loan agreement, has also begun urgent talks with its bankers, and says it has access to money to pay the contractors if it had too. The company will, however, need to start drawing down funding facilities from its panel of 220 banks at the start of June, and requires a waiver of its loan conditions to be extended before then.

Eurotunnel is also to sue the British and French governments for more than £100 million in total to cover unexpected costs because the safety regime imposed is more exacting than originally envisaged. The company will also seek changes in agreements with the French and British state railway companies.



Channelling legal efforts: Sir Alastair Morton wants arbitration in TML dispute

Trade deficit and retail
sales offer little cheer

By COLIN NARBROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE current account deficit narrowed to £575 million in March, the smallest monthly shortfall this year. But the first-quarter deficit was three times larger than in the previous quarter, according to government figures.

Retail sales data showed a drop of 0.8 per cent in volume in March, reflecting consumer wariness before the election, and the late Easter. Year-on-year, sales fell 3 per cent, after an annual 1.4 per cent rise in February, distorted by a rush to beat a VAT rise last April.

James May, director general of the British Retail Consortium, said retailers were now looking forward to re-

newed recovery in year-on-year sales. "The last fortnight in particular has shown positive indications of returning consumer confidence, with good sales over the Easter period in all stores."

The trade and retail sales data held scant evidence of upturn. But pre-election caution had been expected to restrain retail sales, and the flat result suggests the overall economy will show a further fall for the first quarter.

The pound eased back to DM2.9256 at the London close, down less than half a pence, and gained three-quarters of a cent to \$1.7715. The current account deficit, which narrowed from £708

million in February, grew to £2.14 billion in the first quarter, despite recession. The widening was mainly due to a lower projection for the surplus in invisibles, such as insurance, banking and shipping. The deficit on visible trade narrowed last month to £875 million from £1.1 billion in February, but was wider in the first quarter than in the final quarter of 1991.

The visible deficit, excluding oil and erratic items, was £1.1 billion in March, broadly unchanged since last summer. Imports were £9.8 billion in March after almost £10 billion in February, while exports fell £50 million to £8.9 billion.

O&Y banks
look at loan
extension

BRITISH lenders to Olympia & York, the troubled Canadian property group, will decide this weekend on a proposal to advance an emergency loan to the Canary Wharf development.

The 11 construction banks yesterday drew up plans for the loan, believed to be about £30 million, not the £110 million O&Y asked for earlier this week.

They have refused to advance the loan for the 90 days O&Y requested, but are believed to be willing to lend the funds for a month, then decide whether to extend it. The proposals suggest the banks also extend the £52 million emergency loan made three weeks ago.

O'Reilly tops pay list in America

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON
IN NEW YORK

TONY O'Reilly, chairman of Heinz, the food group, and Irish Independent Newspapers, and failed bidder for the Australian Fairfax company, was paid more than any other American executive last year, with the second highest pay packet on record. His \$75.1 million (£42.4 million) in salary, bonuses and share options ranks second only to the record \$78.1 million earned in 1990 by Steven Ross, head of Time Warner, the entertainment group.

But Mr O'Reilly also topped the list, compiled by *BusinessWeek*, the American financial magazine, for giving his shareholders the least for their money over a two-year period, 1989-91, when



O'Reilly: Least returns

his pay packet totalled \$81.1 million.

Also on the worst return list are Paramount Communications' Martin Davis, Chrysler's Lee Iacocca, United Airlines' Stephen Wolf

and Rand Araskog, head of IIT.

Mr O'Reilly protested to *BusinessWeek* at being placed top of its annual pay league table, arguing that \$71.5 million of his salary came from stock options granted ten years ago. He said it was "financial illiteracy" to include them in one year. *BusinessWeek* says it would be "financial illiteracy" to exclude them.

A spokesman said: "We have included them in the year Mr O'Reilly has to declare them as income to the IRS and pay tax on them."

For the same reason, the list excludes Roberto Goizueta, Coca-Cola chairman, who was granted rights to 1 million shares with an indicated value of \$82 million, but will not own or pay tax on them until at least 1996. The

list comes at a time when the big American pension and insurance funds are waging a war over executive pay and performance and demanding a bigger say in how boardroom pay is structured.

The Securities and Exchange Commission has forced companies to give shareholders a much clearer picture of what executives earn. According to *BusinessWeek*, chief executive pay and bonuses fell 7 per cent last year, but once share options were included, total compensation packages rose 20 per cent to a record average \$2.5 million.

Missing for the first time in six years is Paul Fireman, the Reebok chief, who has made \$40.9 million since 1988 while shareholders have received an estimated 17 per cent return.

Trustees
try to save
Maxwell
pensions

By NEIL BENNETT

ACCOUNTANTS and pension trustees are making last-minute efforts this weekend to save the pension payments of 240 former employees of Robert Maxwell's companies, Clay & Partners, the pension trustee, informed members of the Headington Pension Plan yesterday that their pensions would be stopped from next week because of doubts over the value of assets in the fund.

On hearing the news, Robson Rhodes, liquidator of the pension funds, gained court permission to release new information to the trustees. Clay's staff will study the documents this weekend.

Clay's decision is the most drastic taken against Maxwell pensioners since the £456 million pension fund was uncovered in December.

Clay took the action after Robson revealed that Clay's share of the common pension fund was worth between £1.2 million and minus £660,000. Clay had believed it had assets of £1 million. Clay was told by its solicitors that it could not make payments while there was the risk of a deficit in the fund.

The scheme was intended to run like a unit trust. It has emerged that no records of the allocation of units was kept by Bishopsgate Investment Management, which ran the pension schemes, after April 1990, more than 18 months before the Maxwell empire collapsed.

Robson is now trying to find ways of allocating the units between the separate funds. The matter will eventually be decided by the High Court.

Alan Fishman, a Clay director, said: "This came without any warning at all. We had always been led to believe there was still £1 million in the kitty."

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IMF maps integration of former Soviets

By COLIN NARBROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

FINANCE ministers and central bank governors from the Group of Seven leading economies met in Washington this evening to try to chart the best route to integrating the former Soviet Union into the international economy. The West needs growth robust enough to bear the cost.

The G7 sessions tonight and tomorrow will be central to the half-yearly meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, which runs until Tuesday. The aim is to complete the necessary procedures by next week to allow Russia and 14 other former Soviet republics formally to join the IMF. The daunting scale of the support the new members need will be underlined by the fact that the G7 deliberations are to be widened to include Switzerland, Sweden and the Benelux countries — making up the G10 — to discuss the planned stabilisation fund of \$5 billion to \$6 billion for the rouble.

Michel Camdessus, the IMF's managing director, and David Mulford, under-secretary to the American treasury, have warned Russia that any backsliding on its economic reforms could delay access to IMF loans.

M. Camdessus believes Russia could start receiving IMF loans by July, if all goes well. Yesterday, however, he drew attention to the extra capital,

about \$100 billion, that the IMF will need by 1996 to cope with the additional burdens. A \$60 billion capital increase is already in progress.

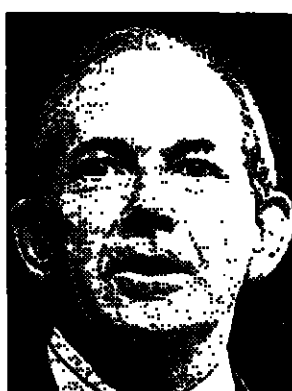
While Russia will dominate the headlines during the Washington meetings, the health of the world economy will be an equally important theme of the G7 deliberations. America has for the past year been pushing for more emphasis on growth than on fighting inflation. But Bonn has told the Americans that Germany has no intention of loosening its monetary reins before it has quelled inflation, and that it is determined to bring unification-driven German public sector deficits under control.

Despite the desire for lower interest rates and stronger economic growth among Germany's European partners, the Europeans are likely to support Germany in the face of American demands. The committee of European central bank governors this month endorsed the Bundesbank's stance.

Since there is little hope of a policy shift from Europe, and America has effectively exhausted its scope for monetary easing or fiscal stimuli, Japan is expected to come under pressure to give the sluggish world economy a boost. Japan, though dogged by a slowdown, still runs huge current account and budget surpluses.

Japan is divided over whether it should give a further boost to its economy, on top of the accelerated public spending programme already decided. Yasushi Mieno, governor of the Bank of Japan, has resisted monetary easing on the ground that Japan is about to throw off its sluggishness.

The ruling Liberal Democrats, however, believe that stimulating domestic growth could be of political benefit and assuage fears about the weakness on the Tokyo stock market.



Camdessus: warning



Piling up: transporters loaded with General Motors cars at an assembly plant in Lansing, Michigan

GM plans \$2bn share offering

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON IN NEW YORK

GENERAL Motors announced a shake-up of North American divisional executives and a plan to raise more than \$2 billion from Wall Street. However, the world's largest carmaker, which lost a record \$4.5 billion last year, denied it was preparing to axe models.

In a boardroom coup a fortnight ago, the company stripped Robert Stempel, its chairman, of most of his executive power. As Mr Stempel addressed GM's 750,000 employees yesterday, the carmaker's shares fell \$2 to \$40.375 in New York. Wall Street expects GM to make a loss of almost \$1 billion this year.

GM plans to sell 50 million new shares in a global offering, increasing its ordinary shares by around 8 per cent to 680 million. Mr Stempel has kept his title of chairman and chief executive, but yesterday's statement was made jointly with John Smith, who has assumed most of Mr Stempel's day-to-day responsibilities and has the title of president and chief operating officer.

The two said that seven North American divisional appointments would enable GM to accelerate changes needed to reduce costs.

Western German economy rebounds with 4% growth

By WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU, EUROPEAN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

HELMUT Schlesinger, president of the Bundesbank, has estimated that the western German economy has bounced back in the first quarter of 1992 with an annualised economic growth rate of 4 per cent.

The resumption of strong growth, although partly a reflection of the German statistical office's difficulties in making correct seasonal adjustments, underlines the roller-coaster nature of the German economy after unification and highlights continued inflationary pressures. After the recession in the past year, the economy is overheating again.

On Thursday, the Bundesbank announced that money supply had grown at an annualised 9.7 per cent in March, overshooting the Bundesbank's target by almost 100 per cent.

There might be further bad news today from the result of the strike ballot in the public sector, after the collapse of pay talks.

Professor Schlesinger, in Stuttgart yesterday, gave warning of a wage-price spiral resulting from present pay and fiscal policies.

He said: "If one considers how much we are under attack internationally at present, because high deficits have led to high interest rates and a restrictive monetary policy — from tomorrow the finance minister and I will be

confronted with that in Washington — then one wonders that local and district council continue to raise their expenditure by 9 per cent as if nothing had changed. Yet another museum, yet another twinning arrangement with a town in Scotland or Portugal, and yet more 'official' tourism: all that goes on unperturbed. And every attempt to reduce the fringe benefits for public sector employees, even marginally, is being rejected outright."

Professor Schlesinger's unusually outspoken remarks reflect growing frustration within the Bundesbank.

Rise of militancy, page 8

Names form new action group

By JONATHAN PRYNN

A SECOND action group has been formed by Lloyd's names on Merrett syndicate 417/418, which has more than 4,000 names stuck on its still-open 1985 year of account.

The group is to be called the Merrett 417/418 1985 Alternative Names Action Group. The syndicate was left open in 1985 after losses increased on a number of run-off contracts written in 1982.

The contracts were similar to those underwritten by Richard Outwaite, the losses on which ultimately led to this year's High Court action by almost 1,000 Outwaite names. The new group is not

to be confused with the existing Merrett Syndicate 418 (1985) Action Group co-ordinated by Ken Lavery, a Canadian. That already said that the purpose of the group was to seek redress on the basis of the underwriters' actions and the resultant loss to the names.

He continued: "I am sure I need hardly remind you that the claim against the underwriter is not dissimilar to the claim against Outwaite."

Mr Lavery is expected in London next week and the heads of the two groups are likely to meet to decide how best to co-ordinate their actions.

renewed and is being advised by David Tiplady of the legal firm D J Freeman.

In a letter posted to names earlier this week, Mr Overend said that the purpose of the group was to seek redress on the basis of the underwriters' actions and the resultant loss to the names.

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BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Forte adds Balmoral to upmarket range

FORTE, the hotel and restaurant group, is pursuing its image-polishing by taking over the management of the Balmoral Hotel in Edinburgh. Although it has been better known for its Little Chef roadside restaurants and Trusthouse hotel chain, Forte has been more aggressively promoting its upmarket establishments, such as the Georges V in Paris, the Ritz in Madrid and the Waldorf in London.

Forte has nine hotels in Scotland. The Balmoral has been hit by the general fall in hotel occupancy over the past two years but Rocco Forte, chief executive of Forte, said: "Our international sales network and our worldwide reservations system will allow us to extract extra business." The Balmoral is privately owned, with 189 bedrooms, and has been extensively refurbished.

Broadside by Dowty

DOWTY Group, which is fighting a £18 million bid from TI Group, today posts its defence circular to shareholders, rejecting TI's contention that the two groups fit together. Dowty will also be defending its record against TI's charge that Dowty's margins have been unsatisfactory. Dowty said TI's terms of 4-for-15, with a cash alternative of 174.67p a share, significantly undervalued the group's potential. Dowty's shares were unchanged at 177p, as were TI's at 66p.

Ifico deeper in red

IFICO, the commercial insurance broker, plunged deeper into the red in the six months to December and has been forced to write off £4.4 million on the sale of two unprofitable subsidiaries, FMW and MBIA. Pre-tax losses rose from £240,000 to £411,000. Ifico now has shell status, but acquisitions are planned. Nycal, the American oil and gas group, acquired rights over about 53 per cent of Ifico's shares last month, and appeared ready to launch a bid. The company has extended its option over the rights until May 1.

Acorn back in profit

ACORN Computer, the USM microcomputer maker controlled by Olivetti of Italy, returned to profitability in the second half of last year. After a first-half loss, it suffered a fall in pre-tax profits to £274,000 for the year, against £1.58 million last time. Earnings per share dropped to 0.4p (2.4p). Once again, there is no dividend. Reduced spending in the consumer market and destocking led to a decline in turnover to £40.9 million (£45.5 million). Sam Wauchop, Acorn's managing director, said 1992 had started encouragingly.

Jourdan pegs payout

THOMAS Jourdan, whose interests include trouser presses and bedroom furniture, is maintaining its final dividend despite incurring full-year losses as a lack of consumer spending took its toll. The company, which suffered a first-half loss of £595,000, reports a pre-tax loss of £519,000 in the year to end-December, against a profit of £1.21 million last time. The final dividend is 1p, giving a reduced total for the year of 1.5p (2.5p). There is a 1.47p loss per share, against earnings of 5.92p last time. Shares firmed 2p to 28p.

Reed chief's salary cut

ALEC Reed, the chairman of Reed Executive, the employment agency, has taken a 42 per cent cut in salary amid deepening losses. He has reduced his salary from £144,000 to £86,000 as losses before tax increased to £5.6 million for the 39 weeks to December 29, compared with a loss of £798,000 in the year to March 1991. Ten branches in London and its suburbs have been closed at a cost of £1.2 million and £119,000 was spent on redundancies. There is no dividend. Mr Reed took a 14 per cent salary cut last June.

Five Oaks cuts losses

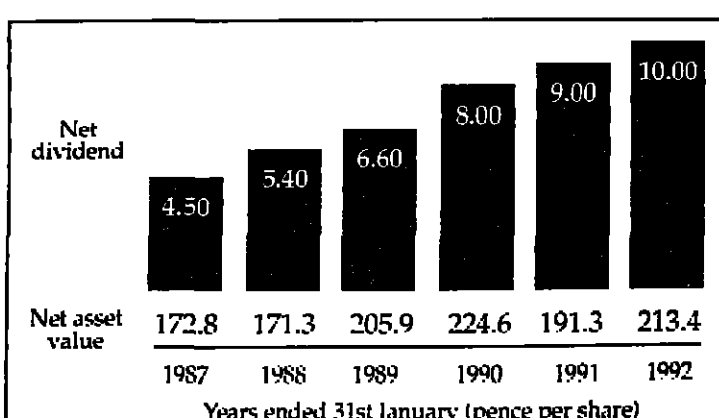
FIVE Oaks Investments, the property company, has reduced its pre-tax losses from £7.9 million to £371,000 for the six months to end-December. The previous year's figure included an £8.3 million property writedown. Rental income increased 5 per cent to £1.6 million and interest cover rose from 0.93 to 1.2 times. Debt was reduced by more than £2 million and net assets per share were almost unchanged at 42p. The company has gained approval for a writedown of the share premium account.

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BEST GROUP AWARD. Investment Trust Magazine 1992.

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Past performance is not necessarily a guide to the future and share prices can fall as well as rise so that you may not be able to recover the amount invested.

New-look McKechnie waits for upturn

THE McKechnie group has done wonders for its investment image by moving out of metals and into plastics, thereby shedding the tag of a metal-basher.

Now it has to wait for the economic recovery to bloom and give organic profits a kick.

Tough conditions in its three main markets — Britain, America and Australia — did not make the six months to end-January a particularly startling period, and pre-interest profits fell by 18 per cent to £10.9 million.

Stripping out non-recurring items, the pre-interest slide was confined to an 8 per cent setback.

However, the impact of earlier disposals, tougher management at the Australian operations and the positive influence of lower debt combined to help knock the net interest charge back from £2.89 million to a modest £323,000, thus allowing McKechnie to turn out higher pre-tax profits of £10.6 million (£10.46 million).

Gearing stood at 6.9 per cent at January 31, down from 29.4 per cent 12 months earlier. However, a £4 million capital expenditure programme involving three new factories in Britain could see gearing rising modestly.

There are mixed views as to just how sensitive McKechnie might be to an economic upturn.

Some argue that the group will be one of the earliest candidates to benefit when general economic conditions are stronger.

Others suggest that McKechnie will only follow the crowd.

Consumer markets that are served by plastic products are not that much different to markets that are served by metal products.

Whatever the truth, McKechnie shares trade between a 10 and 15 per cent premium to the market.

Profits in the second-half should be stronger than in the first, with real progress becoming evident in 1993, and pre-tax profits this year could reach £24 million.

At 345p, up 7p, the shares are on a prospective 16.6 times. The 5.7 per cent yield is, however, the more immediate reason for holding on.

Central TV

IT DOES not take an Inspector Morse to work out what the market sees in Central Independent Television shares.

The company paid just £2,000 for its franchise, which combined with a swinging round of cost cutting, has created the most efficient money-making machine in the sector.

Pre-tax profits last year rose 28 per cent to £24.4 million during a period when advertising revenue fell 1 per cent to £229.7 million. The dividend was increased by 7 per cent to 30.5p. Operating costs, excluding the ITC rental and Channel 4 subscription charges, fell by an extraordinary 29 per cent to £62.8 million, so any increases in advertising revenue — and analysts are expecting up-lifts of 6 to 8 per cent this year — will flow straight to the bottom line.

Profit forecasts are in the range of £38 to £42 million, giving earnings of up to 97p



Looking ahead: Leslie Hill, head of Central TV

and putting the shares on a multiple in the mid-teens. The p/e ratio could fall to about 13 times in 1993 when profits may reach £45 million.

Despite outperformance of 132 per cent over the past 12 months even forecasters at the bottom end of the range continue to rate the shares a buy. The attraction is not just the cash generative qualities of the stock, but also the prospect of takeover warfare after 1994.

The strengths of the stock mean that Central will make a juicy, if expensive, bid target for overseas media giants or will expand by acquisition itself, perhaps into the Anglia region. Acquisition ambitions on the

Continent may be curbed by restrictions in some EC countries, a point that Leslie Hill, chairman and chief executive, has made forcefully to David Mello, the national heritage secretary.

The bid opportunities after 1993, combined with the strategic and operating advantages of the company, make this an attractive and, compared with STV, still not overvalued stock.

Lamont

LAMONT Holdings, the Northern Ireland textiles group, is making a timely acquisition of Alexander Drew & Sons, involved in com-

mission printing, for up to £18.4 million.

To help fund the initial consideration of £16.4 million, Lamont is asking shareholders for £15.9 million, through a one-for-four rights issue at 280p a share. With the shares closing 11p lower at 339p, the theoretical ex-rights price is 327.2p.

Alexander made operating profits of £5.2 million in the year to end-January, on turnover of £14.6 million and net assets of £7.8 million. Lamont is also taking on £7.4 million of borrowings, but positive cash flow should wipe out gearing within a few years.

Lamont also announced a 19 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to £8.11 million in the year to end-December. Turnover was static at £109 million, although this includes £20 million from a full year's contribution from Bonded Fibre Fabric, against nine months previously. The closure of the group's computer maintenance operation led to an extraordinary charge of £191,000. Earnings slipped to 23.21p (28.11p). The final dividend is held at 8.5p, giving an unchanged 12p.

Analysts expect £13.1 million pre-tax this year, for earnings per share of 32p and 10.8 prospective earnings, a discount of about 22 per cent to the market.

The acquisition is on a multiple of 6.3 times and should enhance earnings. The shares look cheap and the rights should be taken up. But it is worth remembering that Lamont's activities are housing-related and will be influenced by evidence of an improvement in housing starts.

GLoucester was not exactly the place to be this week. In the space of a couple of hours, its citizens learned what life on a monopoly board must feel like.

First, the city's largest employer, Dowty Group, found itself the target of a hostile takeover from TI Group.

Then, the sprawling ICI fibre plant on the outskirts of town was caught up in a multinational swap of people and plant between two of the biggest chemicals companies in the world, Hank, Chuck and Virgil, who helped to make Du Pont's US acrylics businesses what they are today, were unceremoniously exchanged for ICI's Kevlar, Ned and Bill, stalwarts of the fibres and plastics division.

Confusing maybe, unsettling certainly. But after the creeping paralysis that afflicted the body corporate for months before election day, the earth tremor in Gloucester harks back to the high noon of Queen Margaret's reign, when even minor captains of industry thought nothing of tilting at windmills.

It is early yet. But if TI's management so much as mutters the word "synergy", or long forgotten but once highly fashionable phrases such as "enhancing shareholder value", it will be a sure sign that business is marching forward towards the good old days.

There were other straws in the week's winds to back up the thought. The battered old pound, which has languished for so long at the bottom of the ERM grid, suddenly began to sport characteristics reminiscent of the petro-pound days in Mrs T's first term. Then, scale boarding houses from Blackpool to Brighton emptied and their occupants decamped inland to Orlando, Miami or Los Angeles as a pound worth \$2.40 (yes, two made) seemed an interesting and affordable.

This week, sterling staggered from the bottom of the ERM pile to third from bottom, overtaking even the

WEEK

Indus to the

BUSINESS PROFILE: James Wolfensohn

The fix-it king everyone wants by his side

The international corporate financier tells Carol Leonard that being an immigrant is the key to his success

When the Reichmann brothers realised that the future of their Olympia & York empire could be in jeopardy if the complex restructuring of its \$12 billion debt was not a success, they picked up the telephone and summoned James D. Wolfensohn. When Willie Purves, the hard-hitting boss of Hongkong and Shanghai Bank finally launched his £3.1 billion bid for Midland Bank, he too wanted one man by his side, James D. Wolfensohn. In New York, where Wolfensohn's "bespoke" corporate finance business — fee income \$75 million — is based, his clients read like a *Who's Who* of the most blue chip of American corporations. The name of James D. Wolfensohn is not new to them. Nor is it new in the upper echelons of informed City circles in London. Wolfensohn never name drops, but he remains on close personal terms with the likes of Lord Rothschild, Sir David Scholey, the Warburg chairman, and Andrew Knight.

'In ten years, I haven't looked at our budgets once. I'm far more interested in creativity and artistry'

ished Wolfensohn over his ignorance of balance sheets with the aunt that he should go to Harvard, that he unleashed his extraordinary drive. Wolfensohn filled in the application form that night and, six months later, he was in Boston. "I didn't have any money to get there so I hitch-hiked a ride on an air force plane." He cold-called the minister for air and talked his way on to a London-bound Hastings jet. An uncle paid his onward fare to America. Once there, he worked his way through Harvard by running his laundry. "Money doesn't matter at all now, but it was terribly important in the beginning because I wanted to get a base. I always wanted to have \$100,000 because I knew



Flying partners: James Wolfensohn often persuades Elaine, his wife, to travel with him in his private plane

that then no one could ever hurt me. I wanted the kids to have \$100,000 too and that, for many years, was my goal. It was a sort of magical figure in my head. I have been very lucky — I've made a few dollars more than that."

Wolfensohn refuses to disclose his net worth. Sources in London, however, recall that after Schroder, he joined Salomon Brothers in New York, developed its fledgling corporate finance division and then left, in 1981, to launch his own firm. As he departed he declared his intention to cash in his \$4 million equity stake. A timely reverse takeover by Phibro increased the value of his holding to \$14 million. Wolfensohn finally had the secure base he so desired. Since then, he has increased his fortune considerably.

His firm, James D. Wolfensohn Inc, now employs 45 professionals, including partners Paul Volcker, the former Federal Re-

serve chairman, and Steve Miller, the man photographed at Olympia & York press conferences this week. He has created an organisation that offers what he calls "an in-house investment banking service" to its clients, "advising them on strategy, financing, mergers and acquisitions and then implementing them, but not getting into the financing itself". He has also launched a joint venture with Fuji Bank of Japan to bridge the void between Japanese and American companies and he is now launching a similar joint venture with Lord Rothschild — J Rothschild, Wolfensohn & Co — to concentrate on "mergers and acquisitions and financial strategy in the EC and eastern Europe".

Bruno Schroder, a friend since Harvard, says: "He is totally unassuming, and he can slip into any level of society." Schroder quotes two lines from Rudyard Kipling's poem *If*: "If you can talk with

crowds and keep your virtue, Or walk with Kings — nor lose the common touch." "That whole poem is Jim," he says.

Schroder's reference to virtue is not made by chance. It is a quality always referred to when Wolfensohn's name is mentioned. He has steadfastly steered his firm away from the corrupting excesses of the eighties. Wolfensohn says: "That was not by chance but by design. I was offered all of those things."

Isaac Stern, the violinist and president of the Carnegie Hall, concurs: "Amid all the shenanigans on Wall Street, his office was known to be an absolutely clean and honourable place where people could go to get advice, given honestly and discreetly, and without a hand outstretched for profit." Wolfensohn explains: "I'm not in business to make the next dollar or do the next deal. In ten years, I haven't looked at our

life. He spends two days and three nights a week in Washington, running the Kennedy Centre. The rest of the week he is in New York, or travelling abroad. The journey, for which he uses his private plane, from his Fifth Avenue apartment to the Kennedy Centre, takes one-and-a-half hours. "A plane is not a status symbol to me, it is a working tool." He often persuades Elaine, his American wife, to travel with him.

Their 12-roomed apartment on Fifth Avenue is supplemented by a cottage in up-state New York — "a small bungalow, 40 miles from New York in a working class bohemian area" — and a third home, "our retirement home," being built in Jacksonhole, Wyoming.

He hesitates before using the word retirement. "I hate that word because if I did nothing I would go crazy." But as he speaks about his exhaustion he sounds convincing. He says that his wife and children want him to slow down or to take a six-month sabbatical. More objective observers, however, scoff at this suggestion. "He's been saying that for years, each time he gets to the top of the next mountain," says Andrew Knight. "I don't know what drives him. I suppose it's recognition."

Wolfensohn would not disagree. Last year, at the end of his 12-year stint as chairman of the Carnegie Hall, during which time he helped raise \$60 million to rebuild and extend its buildings, Stern surprised him by naming a new wing "the Wolfensohn Wing". Wolfensohn was reduced, publicly, to tears. "I felt enormously privileged because I had had a chance to come from Australia and make an indelible contribution to the life of New York, just as I am now trying to do in Washington."

That recognition seems to have had a more profound effect than mere tears. "I think I've got it in perspective now. I think I've actually found where I am," he says slowly. "A lot of the insecurities that goaded me in the beginning have gone. I wanted to do these things in my own way, to prove something to myself."

Despite or because of those insecurities, Wolfensohn is clear that his immigrant status helped. "I am an immigrant and that is very important. As an immigrant you have to create an ambience around yourself. It also means, however, that you are not bound into any pre-ordained style. If you are poured into something, with a pre-ordained requirement to go into a family firm, or a certain profession, then that freedom is denied. That is why I feel so privileged."

WEEK ENDING John Bell

Industry marches on to the good old days

GLoucester was not exactly the place to be this week. In the space of a couple of hours, its citizens learned what life on a monopoly board must feel like.

First, the city's largest employer, Dowty Group, found itself the target of a hostile takeover from TI Group. Then, the sprawling ICI fibres plant on the outskirts of town was caught up in a multinational swag of people and plant between two of the biggest chemicals companies in the world. Hank, Chuck and Virgil, who helped to make Du Pont's US acrylics businesses what they are today, were unceremoniously exchanged for ICI's Kevin, Ned and Bill, stalwarts of the fibres and plastics division.

Confusing maybe, unsettling certainly. But after the creeping paralysis that afflicted the body corporate for months before election day, the earth tremor in Gloucester harks back to the high noon of Queen Margaret's reign, when even minor captains of industry thought nothing of tilting at windmills.

It is early yet. But if TI's management so much as mutters the word "synergy", or long forgotten but once highly fashionable phrases such as "enhancing shareholder value", it will be a sure sign that business is marching forward towards the good old days.

There were other straws in the week's winds to back up the thought. The battered old pound, which has languished for so long at the bottom of the ERM grid, suddenly began to sport characteristics reminiscent of the petrodollar days in Mrs T's first term. Then, seaside boarding houses from Blackpool to Brighton emptied and their occupants decamped instead to Orlando, Miami or Los Angeles as a pound worth \$2.40 (yes, two) made America interesting and affordable.

This week, sterling staggered from the bottom of the ERM pile to third from bottom, overtaking even the



French franc. It might be premature to pull out the holiday brochures, though, as the shine on sterling was as much a reflection of local difficulties in Frankfurt as a new order in London.

The ins and outs of this have eluded many of the less cerebral media, where the knee-jerk precedes solid footwork. Cries of "lower interest rates any day" fail to recognise that sterling is strong

Scotland's Royal Bank and the rival suit from Standard Chartered that it provoked.

The expatriate Scotsmen who now, as then, run Hongkong Bank are these days on a wicket much more to Robin Leigh-Pemberton's liking. Ten years ago, the Governor's displeasure at the prospect of an overseas bank taking a sizeable stake in Britain was ignored by the men from Hongkong. Now they say they will domicile here and submit to the regulatory wishes of Threadneedle Street.

But before the austere, intellectual Sir Jeremy throws his hat into the ring, he will doubtless weigh the facts carefully. Mr Leigh-Pemberton, or his superiors at the other end of town, may faint away at the prospect of the big four banks becoming three, with 20,000 jobs lost and every high street wondering whether its Lloyds or Midland branch will be the one to close.

The current governor can, just like his predecessor, scupper everything through a damning presentation to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

It was also comforting for nostalgia lovers to see the economic forecasters back to their old soothing ways. Most have cheerfully forecast seven of the past two economic recoveries. After all, what's a mere blip or three between econometric modellers?

This time, the British Chambers of Commerce rummaged through the thick layer of fertilizer engulfing most of the commercial world and found some green shoots poking up in service industries. The service sector resumed growth for the first time in nearly two years, the chambers discovered, even before pre-election blight had fully run its course. The shoots are fragile, though. The chambers see unemployment rising a while yet.

In Gloucester, they must be hoping that multinationalals and synergists have other ideas.

EC motor 'pact' with Japan is in doubt

THE EC Commission's accord with Tokyo restricting 1992 imports of Japanese cars into Europe was thrown into doubt yesterday. Japanese sources in Brussels claimed that no figures had been agreed.

The confusion that followed a confident commission announcement on Thursday recalled other recent "agreements". Three weeks ago, the commission insisted that a deal had been forged with America on subsidies to Airbus. Since then, however, American negotiators have refused to sign anything.

On Thursday night, the commission said Japanese direct car exports to the Community would fall by 5 per cent this year, to around 1.19 million cars. Yesterday, a spokesman said the figure was 6 per cent, and EC sources said Japan had agreed to a definite reduction by 75,000 cars.

However, both the percentage and the numbers were denied by Japanese officials in Brussels.

Transplant cars, such as those made by Nissan at Sunderland, are not affected by the negotiations. Transplant sales will probably rise to about 325,000 cars this year from 310,000 in 1991.

TOM WALKER
Brussels

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Tony Ryan made a rare venture into the public domain, when he addressed the annual gathering of Ireland's business leaders in Killarney. In between quoting Joyce, he told the story of GPA, the world's largest aircraft leasing company, which he created 17 years ago...

Business — The Sunday Times tomorrow

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gross				
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Amount invested	Over	Over	Over	Over
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10.48	10.48	10.48	10.48	10.48
10.48	10.48	10.48	10.48	10.48
10.48	10.48	10.48	10.48	10.48
10.48	10.48	10.48	10.48	10.48

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Date.....

Bid talk sends Lasso climbing

THE shares in Lasso, the oil exploration group, climbed 26p to 233p and the market went on bid alert amid talk that the hunter may soon become the hunted. Stories circulating in the Square Mile suggested that Elf Aquitaine, the French state-owned oil group, or its rival, Total, may be considering a bid for the bid, but Elf said it after ICI acquired a similar-sized holding.

Yesterday's talk of a bid started on the bid options market, where investors were paying heavily for the call in the May and August series. A total of 2,000 options were completed, equivalent to 2 million shares. The speculators said that Lasso had become vulnerable to a bid after last year's £1.2 billion acquisition of Ultramar. Its share price has fallen from a high of 330p and reached a low of 179p recently.

However, some dealers were anxious to play down the bid talk, claiming that the buoyancy in the share price was in anticipation of the sale of its Wilmington refinery in California, which it acquired with Ultramar. Analysts calculate that Wilmington could

fetch between £300 million and £400 million. The rest of the oil sector enjoyed selective support as the latest round of Opec talks began in Geneva. There were gains for Barmah, 6p to 588p, Enterprise Oil, 10p to 402p, and Gosh Petroleum, 2p to 57p.

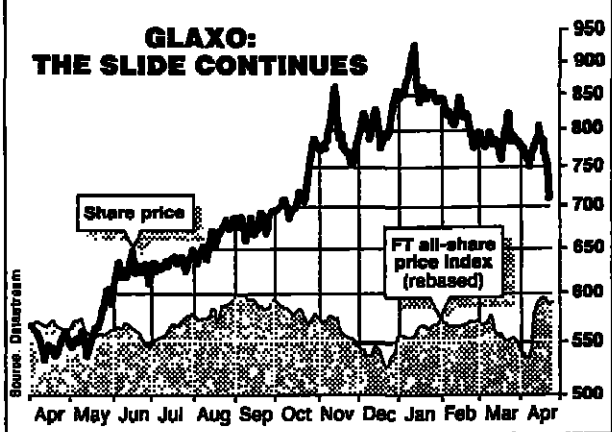
Elsewhere, share prices ended the three-week election account on a firm note, with the FT-SE 100 index putting in a late rise to finish at its best of the day - 33.2 points higher at 2,643. The rise in the index for the account is 260.3 points. Turnover was a healthy £28 million as investors continued squaring up their positions.

Government securities were left with falls of 1/4 at the longer end as investors con-

Hillsdown Holdings, the food to furniture group, slipped 2p to 194p as it announced plans to merge its two quoted Canadian food subsidiaries, Maple Leaf and Corporate Foods. A line of 3.5 million shares went through the market at 195p. The shares go ex-dividend in a couple of weeks.

Dealers reported income-buying by some institutions, which could delay the prospect of an early cut in British interest rates.

Dealers reported income-buying by some institutions, which could delay the prospect of an early cut in British interest rates.



on Monday. These included British Gas, up 5p to 275p, T&N, unchanged at 134p, Taylor Woodrow, 2p easier at 129p, General Accident, 6p better at 472p, Amec, 6p harder at 176p, Laird Group, 17p higher at 314p, Morgan Crucible, 3p easier at 101p, and Ocean Group, 5p better at 347p.

The pharmaceutical sector remained in the doldrums as American investors, fearing the prospect of a congressional investigation into drug prices, continued switching to shares in the cyclical industries. Shares in British drug companies have been sliding for much of this week, worried by the situation on the other side of the Atlantic.

City fund managers spent most of last year increasing their weighting in the sector and they are now worried that it has reached its peak and

gestions that it had spoken to Lloyds about acquiring surplus high street branches should any counterbid by it succeed.

Lloyds Bank finished 22p higher at 424p as some speculators took the view that the group may now be having second thoughts about making an aggressive bid.

A downgrading of its long-term debt rating this week appears to have made little impression on Barclays Bank which finished 19p better at 354p.

National Westminster was also a firm market, climbing 4p to 335p, along with Standard Chartered, 11p up at 479p, and the Royal Bank of Scotland 2p dearer at 183p. Bid target Dowty was un-

Henderson Crosthwaite, the broker, was a big buyer of Vickers, 9p better at 163p, despite the news this week that the group had failed to agree a price for the sale of Rolls-Royce.

Henderson is now looking for a recovery at Rolls-Royce in the second half, helped by a lower cost base.

changed at 177p. Earlier this week it received a long-awaited offer from TI Group, steady at 669p, valuing the group at £518 million.

Tarmac, tipped by some as the next takeover target, hardened 9p to 157p.

MICHAEL CLARK

Inflation edges up in EC

AVERAGE inflation in the European Community crept up to 4.8 per cent in the year to the end of March from 4.7 per cent in the 12 months to the end of February.

Eurostat, the EC statistics office, said. Consumer prices rose by an average of 0.4 per cent in the EC during the month of March.

Greece topped the national price-rise league with a 2 per cent rise in consumer prices - mainly attributed to a 9.4 per cent increase in clothing and footwear prices and a 4.9 per cent rise for durable goods. France and Britain registered the smallest increases, both had 4.3 per cent.

Starquest win

Berry Starquest, a GT Management investment trust, reports a 26.5 per cent rise in net asset value a share to 181.2p for the 12 months to January 31. The trust has won the one-year performance award for UK capital growth trusts presented by Microcap. A dividend of 2p (1.8p) is being paid for the year.

Holt advances

Joseph Holt, the independent brewer based in Manchester, lifted pre-tax profits from £5.7 million to £6.4 million last year. A final dividend of 26p (23p) makes 35p (31p) for the year. The shares slipped 25p to £22.25.

Clayton's loss

Clayton, Son & Co (Holdings) has cut its final dividend after a pre-tax loss of £490,626 last year, compared with a £543,023 profit. The final is 3p (9.3p), making 3p (11.8p).

Ramco dives

Ramco Oil Services, the Aberdeen oilfield pipe-cleaning specialist, saw pre-tax profits halve last year, from £1.1 million to £526,000. Earnings per share fell to 2.99p (3.96p) and the dividend remains at 2p.

Downiebrae cut

Downiebrae Holdings is halving its single dividend to 0.5p after pre-tax profits declined by a third to £422,968 last year.

WALL STREET

New York - Blue chips drifted lower in mid-morning after moving mildly higher at the start. The Dow Jones industrial average slipped 4 points to 3,344.61 after rising to 3,361.

A one-point drop in General Motors, a member of the Dow average, after a delayed opening "took the steam out of the average," said Ron Doran, the chief of institu-

tional trading at C.L. King. □ Tokyo - Shares bounced back from early losses to close near their day's highs. The Nikkei index rose 140.4 points, or 0.81 per cent, to 17,542.45.

□ Hong Kong - The Hang Seng index closed at another record, but profit-taking pushed prices down from their highs. The index rose 42.39 to 5,330.17. (Reuters)

Apr 24	Apr 23	Apr 22	Apr 21	Apr 20
main	main	main	main	main
AMT Inc	59.00	58.00	57.00	56.00
AMT Corp	58.00	57.00	56.00	55.00
AMT Ltd	57.00	56.00	55.00	54.00
AMT Inc	56.00	55.00	54.00	53.00
AMT Corp	55.00	54.00	53.00	52.00
AMT Ltd	54.00	53.00	52.00	51.00
AMT Inc	53.00	52.00	51.00	50.00
AMT Corp	52.00	51.00	50.00	49.00
AMT Ltd	51.00	50.00	49.00	48.00
AMT Inc	50.00	49.00	48.00	47.00
AMT Corp	49.00	48.00	47.00	46.00
AMT Ltd	48.00	47.00	46.00	45.00
AMT Inc	47.00	46.00	45.00	44.00
AMT Corp	46.00	45.00	44.00	43.00
AMT Ltd	45.00	44.00	43.00	42.00
AMT Inc	44.00	43.00	42.00	41.00
AMT Corp	43.00	42.00	41.00	40.00
AMT Ltd	42.00	41.00	40.00	39.00
AMT Inc	41.00	40.00	39.00	38.00
AMT Corp	40.00	39.00	38.00	37.00
AMT Ltd	39.00	38.00	37.00	36.00
AMT Inc	38.00	37.00	36.00	35.00
AMT Corp	37.00	36.00	35.00	34.00
AMT Ltd	36.00	35.00	34.00	33.00
AMT Inc	35.00	34.00	33.00	32.00
AMT Corp	34.00	33.00	32.00	31.00
AMT Ltd	33.00	32.00	31.00	30.00
AMT Inc	32.00	31.00	30.00	29.00
AMT Corp	31.00	30.00	29.00	28.00
AMT Ltd	30.00	29.00	28.00	27.00
AMT Inc	29.00	28.00	27.00	26.00
AMT Corp	28.00	27.00	26.00	25.00
AMT Ltd	27.00	26.00	25.00	24.00
AMT Inc	26.00	25.00	24.00	23.00
AMT Corp	25.00	24.00	23.00	22.00
AMT Ltd	24.00	23.00	22.00	21.00
AMT Inc	23.00	22.00	21.00	20.00
AMT Corp	22.00	21.00	20.00	19.00
AMT Ltd	21.00	20.00	19.00	18.00
AMT Inc	20.00	19.00	18.00	17.00
AMT Corp	19.00	18.00	17.00	16.00
AMT Ltd	18.00	17.00	16.00	15.00
AMT Inc	17.00	16.00	15.00	14.00
AMT Corp	16.00	15.00	14.00	13.00
AMT Ltd	15.00	14.00	13.00	12.00
AMT Inc	14.00	13.00	12.00	11.00
AMT Corp	13.00	12.00	11.00	10.00
AMT Ltd	12.00	11.00	10.00	9.00
AMT Inc	11.00	10.00	9.00	8.00
AMT Corp	10.00	9.00	8.00	7.00
AMT Ltd	9.00	8.00	7.00	6.00
AMT Inc	8.00	7.00	6.00	5.00
AMT Corp	7.00	6.00	5.00	4.00
AMT Ltd	6.00	5.00	4.00	3.00
AMT Inc	5.00	4.00	3.00	2.00
AMT Corp	4.00	3.00	2.00	1.00
AMT Ltd	3.00	2.00	1.00	0.00
AMT Inc	2.00	1.00	0.00	-1.00
AMT Corp	1.00	0.00	-1.00	-2.00
AMT Ltd	0.00	-1.00	-2.00	-3.00
AMT Inc	-1.00	-2.00	-3.00	-4.00
AMT Corp	-2.00	-3.00	-4.00	-5.00
AMT Ltd	-3.00	-4.00	-5.00	-6.00
AMT Inc	-4.00	-5.00	-6.00	-7.00
AMT Corp	-5.00	-6.00	-7.00	-8.00
AMT Ltd	-6.00	-7.00	-8.00	-9.00
AMT Inc	-7.00	-8.00	-9.00	-10.00
AMT Corp	-8.00	-9.00	-10.00	-11.00
AMT Ltd	-9.00	-10.00	-11.00	-12.00
AMT Inc	-10.00	-11.00	-12.00	-13.00
AMT Corp	-11.00	-12.00	-13.00	-14.00
AMT Ltd	-12.00	-13.00	-14.00	-15.00
AMT Inc	-13.00	-14.00	-15.00	-16.00
AMT Corp	-14.00	-15.00	-16.00	-17.00
AMT Ltd	-15.00	-16.00	-17.00	-18.00
AMT Inc	-16.00	-17.00	-18.00	-19.00
AMT Corp	-17.00	-18.00	-19.00	-20.00
AMT Ltd	-18.00	-19.00	-20.00	-21.00
AMT Inc	-19.00	-20.00	-21.00	-22.00
AMT Corp	-20.00	-21.00	-22.00	-23.00
AMT Ltd	-21.00	-22.00	-23.00	-24.00
AMT Inc	-22.00	-23.00	-24.00	-25.00
AMT Corp	-23.00	-24.00	-25.00	-26.00
AMT Ltd	-24.00	-25.00	-26.00	-27.00
AMT Inc	-25.00	-26.00	-27.00	-28.00
AMT Corp	-26.00	-27.00	-28.00	-29.00
AMT Ltd	-27.00	-28.00	-29.00	-30.00
AMT Inc	-28.00	-29.00	-30.00	-31.00
AMT Corp	-29.00	-30.00	-31.00	-32.00
AMT Ltd	-30.00	-31.00	-32.00	-33.00
AMT Inc	-31.00	-32.00	-33.00	-34.00
AMT Corp	-32.00	-33.00	-34.00	-35.00
AMT Ltd	-33.00	-34.00	-35.00	-36.00
AMT Inc	-34.00	-35.00	-36.00	-37.00
AMT Corp	-35.00	-36.00	-37.00	-38.00
AMT Ltd	-36.00	-37.00	-38.00	-39.00
AMT Inc	-37.00	-38.00	-39.00	-40.00
AMT Corp	-38.00	-39.00	-40.00	-41.00
AMT Ltd	-39.00	-40.00	-41.00	-42.00
AMT Inc	-40.00	-41.00	-42.00	-43.00
AMT Corp	-41.00	-42.00	-43.00	-44.00
AMT Ltd	-42.00	-43.00	-44.00	-45.00
AMT Inc	-43.00	-44.00	-45.00	-46.00
AMT Corp	-44.00	-45.00	-46.00	-47.00
AMT Ltd	-45.00	-46.00	-47.00	-48.00
AMT Inc	-46.00	-47.00	-48.00	-49.00
AMT Corp	-47.00	-48.00	-49.00	-50.00
AMT Ltd	-48.00	-49.00	-50.00	-51.00
AMT Inc	-49.00	-50.00	-51.00	-52.00
AMT Corp	-50.00	-51.00	-52.00	-53.00
AMT Ltd	-51.00	-52.00	-53.00	-54.00
AMT Inc	-52.00	-53.00	-54.00	-55.00
AMT Corp	-53.00	-54.00	-55.00	-56.00
AMT Ltd	-54.00	-55.00	-56.00	-57.00
AMT Inc	-55.00	-56.00	-57.00	-58.00
AMT Corp	-56.00	-57.00	-58.00	-59.00
AMT Ltd	-57.00	-58.00	-59.00	-60.00
AMT Inc	-58.00	-59.00	-60.00	-61.00
AMT Corp	-59.00	-60.00	-61.00	-62.00
AMT Ltd	-60.00	-61.00	-62.00	-63.00
AMT Inc	-61.00	-62.00	-63.00	-64.00
AMT Corp	-62.00	-63.00	-64.00	-65.00
AMT Ltd	-63.00	-64.00	-65.00	-66.00
AMT Inc	-64.00	-65.00	-66.00	-67.00
AMT Corp	-65.00	-66.00	-67.00	-68.00
AMT Ltd	-66.00	-67.00	-68.00	-69.00
AMT Inc	-67.00	-68.00	-69.00	-70.00
AMT Corp	-68.00	-69.00	-70.00	-71.00
AMT Ltd	-69.00	-70.00	-71.00	-72.00
AMT Inc	-70.00	-71.00	-72.00	-73.00
AMT Corp	-71.00	-72.00	-73.00	-74.00
AMT Ltd	-72.00	-73.00	-74.00	-75.00
AMT Inc	-73.00	-74.00	-75.00	-76.00
AMT Corp	-74.00	-75.00	-76.00	-77.00
AMT Ltd	-75.00	-76.00	-77.00	-78.00
AMT Inc	-76.00	-77.00	-78.00	-79.00
AMT Corp	-77.00	-78.00	-79.00	-80.00
AMT Ltd	-78.00	-79.00	-80.00	-81.00
AMT Inc	-79.00	-80.00	-81.00	-82.00
AMT Corp	-80.00	-81.00	-82.00	-83.00
AMT Ltd	-81.00	-82.00	-83.00	-84.00
AMT Inc	-82.00	-83.00	-84.00	-85.00
AMT Corp	-83.00	-84.00	-85.00	-86.00
AMT Ltd	-84.00	-85.00	-86.00	-87.00
AMT Inc	-85.00	-86.00	-87.00	-88.00
AMT Corp	-86.00	-87.00	-88.00	-89.00
AMT Ltd	-87.00	-88.00	-89.00	-90.00
AMT Inc	-88.00	-89.00	-90.00	-91.00
AMT Corp	-89.00	-90.00	-91.00	-92.00
AMT Ltd	-90.00	-91.00	-92.00	-93.00
AMT Inc	-91.00	-92.00	-93.00	-94.00
AMT Corp	-92.00	-93.00	-94.00	-95.00
AMT Ltd	-93.00	-94.00	-95.00	-96.00
AMT Inc	-94.00	-95.00	-96.00	-97.00
AMT Corp	-95.00	-96.00	-97.00	-98.00
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All quiet on the housing front

This week was meant to bring better news about the housing market. The election is over, and won by the Conservatives who, many believed, would cut interest rates almost immediately. That would help to stimulate a housing market that would be raring to go as people poured into estate agents over the Easter weekend. Sunny weather was meant to engender similar feelings in the breasts of provisional buyers, lured by cut-price offers for first-time buyers and fixed-rate mortgages for all.

In many parts of the country, people did spend some of the break sizing up the local market, although, in the words of one estate agent, Easter weekend was "quiet". But there is still little sign of enthusiasm or commitment to buy. As the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors pointed out this week, "a change in individual circumstances, through a fall in unemployment rates for example, will be essential to effect any substantial change in the market".

Unemployment is still high,

and many homeowners, who would have taken the chance of buying into a cheap housing market in better times, hang back for fear of taking on a large commitment.

The Conservatives' unwillingness to take advantage of post-election euphoria and cut rates has not helped. Borrowers have said that lower interest rates would be the single most important factor in encouraging them to take out a mortgage. Even if half a point is shaved off the rate later, it might not be enough. Lenders say that they might need a full point cut in rates, but nothing is now likely to materialise before the summer, when the peak spring buying period is past, and buyers have abandoned the property market for the beach.

This week also brought a reminder, if any were needed, of the large number of borrowers

whose mortgages are higher than the value of their properties. The Council of Mortgage Lenders said that was true of more than 380,000 borrowers. Yesterday, UBS Phillips & Drew argued that the figure was nearer to a million, with 400,000 first-time buyers in this position.

All these people are trapped in the homes they bought at the top of the market, in the boom years of the late 1980s. They cannot move because they will have no deposit for the next property, and could be pursued for the shortfall between the price fetched by their home

COMMENT

SARA MCCONNELL
PERSONAL FINANCE WRITER

increase now the election is over. But these flurries will have to translate into signatures on completed mortgage advances before they have a significant impact on the market. The sooner the government creates the right conditions for a cut in interest rates, the better.

Precious paper

Some customers of the Abbey National may have accidentally thrown away one of the most significant pieces of information they have received from the bank for some time. When it sent out annual statements of interest on current accounts for tax purposes this week, Abbey enclosed a leaflet showing interest rates on all its accounts, both monthly and annual, and for the first time it has

included all interest rates on obsolete accounts.

Unfortunately, the leaflet was not mentioned in the covering letter and as the leaflet was printed on the same paper as the tax deduction certificate, many people could be forgiven for thinking that it was just more junk mail.

The information in the leaflet is important for two reasons. First, many people may not realise that they have an obsolete account, particularly if they do not visit their branch very often. They might not know that they can get a better rate on the same amount of money with a similar notice period.

Second, the leaflet offers an at-a-glance comparison of all the rates at different levels and lets savers make an informed choice. Building societies and banks have learnt, sometimes to their cost, that customers want to know whether they can get a better rate on their savings. That is, after all, one of the points of saving in the first place. Abbey has responded to this need.

Who should pay the price of failure? Sara McConnell reports

Investors face burden of funding financial shield

REGULATORS will start a comprehensive review of the funding of the Investors' Compensation Scheme next week. It looks almost certain to result in higher premiums or larger deductions from investments to pay for the costs of the scheme in the year to April 1993 and beyond.

Initial costs of paying compensation last year amounted to £26.5 million, but the ICS estimates that the final cost could be as much as £37 million. This includes administration and running costs as well as claims. The figure of £37 million for 1991-2 is hotly contested by the Financial Intermediaries' Managers and Brokers Regulatory Association (Fimbra), which says it could be lower.

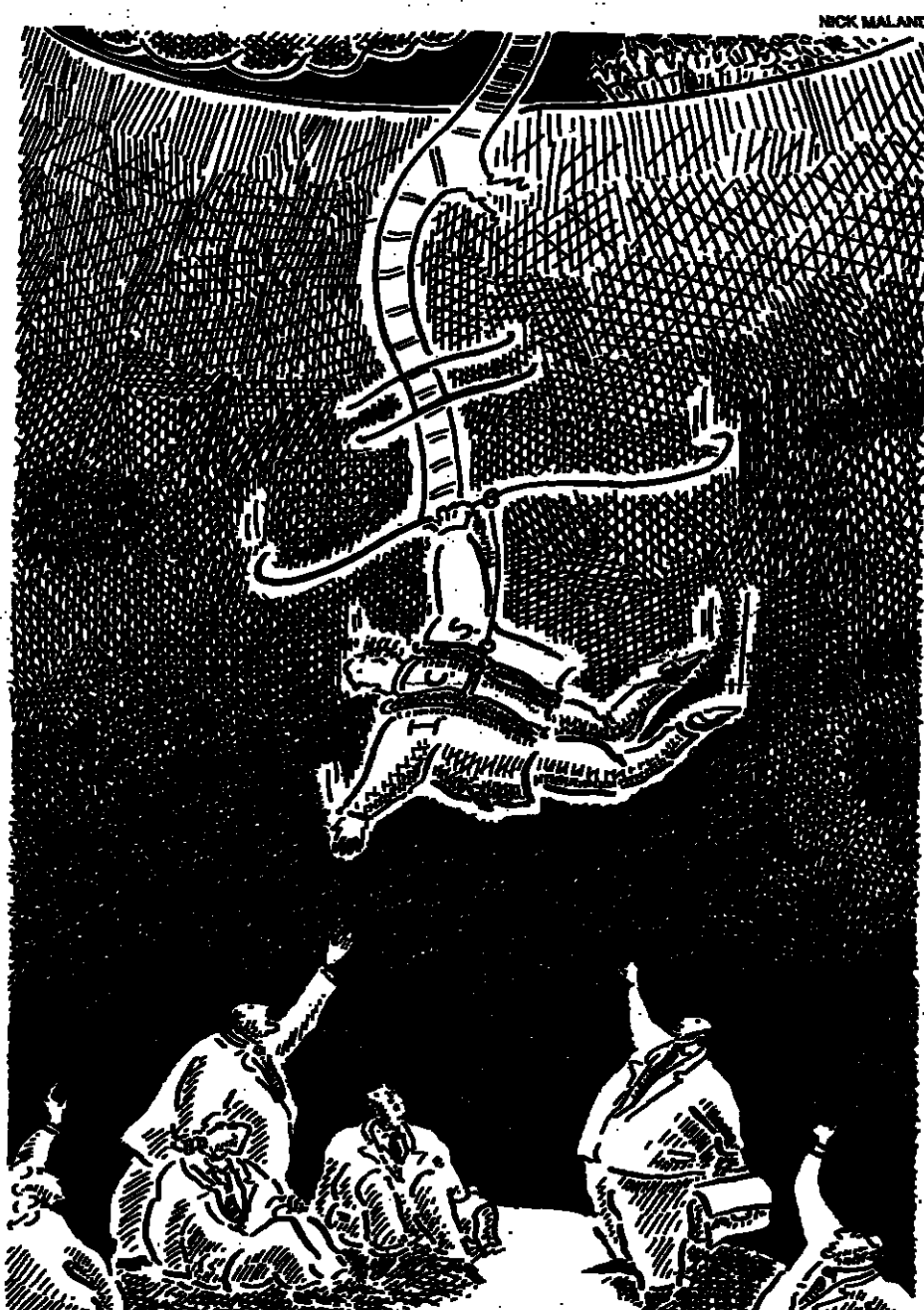
In fact, no one knows the final cost yet, because claims are still coming in from investors in several firms declared in default last year, and it is likely to take several months for the ICS to process and assess claims.

Since the scheme started in 1988, set up to pay a maximum of £48,000 per claimant, costs have escalated rapidly, more than doubling between 1991 and 1992. There is no reason to believe they will fall in 1992-3, and already there are firms in the pipeline which are set to be declared in default in this year. The ICS has to declare firms in default before claims can be assessed.

Added to this, insurance taken out to cover claims of between £25 million and £100 million has not been renewed after it ran out at the end of last month because the ICS could not find cover at an acceptable premium. Insurance will pay out on claims above £25 million in 1991-2. Regulators, who have to pay for the scheme through a levy, are urgently asking how compensation claims can be paid for in future, and are likely to conclude that investors must foot more of the bill.

Investors already indirectly pay for the compensation scheme because companies pass the cost on to them, normally as a portion of expenses deducted from their investment, accounted for under a blanket heading of "expenses". However, the working party on the future funding of the scheme, which meets for the first time next week, is likely to suggest that investors will have to meet a larger proportion of the cost, perhaps through a product levy.

Godfrey Jilings, chief executive of Fimbra, which regulates independent financial advisers, is keen on the idea of a product levy, particularly



because financial advisers are normally paid on commission and cannot hand on the costs of compensation to their clients. "The costs of a product levy are very small and insignificant. The cost of a fully funded scheme would perhaps be between 6p and 10p per £100 of product." However, these costs would rise with the cost of claims.

Julia Lisching, chief policy and administration officer at the Life Assurance and Unit Trust Regulatory Organisation, which regulates the marketing activities of life offices and unit trust companies, said: "Investors should bear the cost of compensation, directly as a policyholder, or as a shareholder through lower dividends."

The loss of insurance cover would also mean any costs above £25 million would have to be met ultimately by investors, she said.

Consumer groups said that the idea of a product levy was "fair". However, Jean Eaglesham, the Consumer Association's money policy manager, said: "We would be concerned if all the funding was done that way. It is a healthy discipline for companies to have to pay something."

The question of funding the compensation scheme is closely linked to the structure of the self-regulatory system, widely criticised as too complex for investors to understand and vulnerable to pressure from vested interests within the financial services industry. Last month, a report by Sir Kenneth Clucas proposed that there should be just one regulator for private investors. A single regulator

should reduce the in-fighting about who will pay what. ICS has already indicated there will be a further levy on regulators to cover costs later this year for 1991-2.

These could be higher than even the ICS has suggested. At least three of the firms declared in default last year sold home income plans, where elderly people were encouraged to mortgage their homes and buy an investment bond which would pay the mortgage and have some income left over.

The press and television publicity surrounding companies selling these plans is likely to result in a large number of claims, but solicitors working on behalf of clients are still receiving instructions. Under ICS rules, investors have six months to lodge a claim.

No net under unauthorised company

THE 25 British investors who put money into what they believed were high-yielding deposit bonds from a company operating in the Isle of Man will not qualify for a payout from the Investors' Compensation Scheme if the company goes into liquidation, because the companies involved and their controller were not authorised under the Financial Services Act (Sara McConnell writes).

Investors are believed to have put a total of £2.5 million into bonds offered by Asset Management Ltd, an Isle of Man registered company. Investments were made through Financial Centres Ltd, based in St Albans, Hertfordshire. Both companies were controlled by Roger Shrubbs. On Thursday this week, the Securities and Investments Board and the Isle of Man's Financial Supervision Commission acted together to

bring proceedings against the companies, restraining them from conducting investment business. The FSC has applied for provisional liquidation of Asset Management on public interest grounds.

Asset Management was offering capital deposit bonds. The five-year bonds offered a high guaranteed yield of between 14 per cent and 15 per cent gross, and also guaranteed the return of the original capital. Sib said: "It appears that Mr Shrubbs was inviting investors to put money into capital deposit bonds. It also appears that this money was invested in shares or made as loans to private companies and individuals known to Mr Shrubbs."

It is not yet clear how much of this money will be recoverable. But if the company goes into liquidation, investors will not be able to claim on the

Investors' Compensation Scheme as this covers only authorised schemes, the ICS said.

Mr Shrubbs was an appointed representative of Allied Dunbar from December 1987 to July 1991. Any Allied Dunbar life or pension plans bought through Mr Shrubbs and put on risk in the normal way would be safe. However, it is not clear whether people believed they were putting money into an Allied Dunbar investment. Those who did might be able to argue for compensation from the company. Allied Dunbar said it was too early to comment.

Any investor who has dealt directly with Asset Management or through Financial Centres or Roger Shrubbs should contact Asset Management's provisional liquidator, Christopher Talavera, at Cork Gully, 12 Finch Road, Douglas, Isle of Man, telephone (0624) 626711.

Scheme gives protection to individuals

THE Investors' Compensation Scheme is designed to protect individual investors who lose money when an investment adviser, manager or stockbroker goes under. Businesses may also be covered, but only in certain, clearly defined circumstances (Liz Dolan writes).

Compensation is normally limited to £48,000, although there is an absolute ceiling of £50,000. People owed up to £30,000 are reimbursed in full. Those who have lost more will be able to claim 90 per cent of the next £20,000. In a particularly bad year, total compensation paid by the scheme may be scaled down. This will only happen if compensation costs for a single year exceed £100 million.

The terms of the scheme are contained in a booklet, published by the Securities and Investments Board.

It is restricted to investments made after a certain date, which varies, depending on the nature of the claim. For instance, if a claim is made because of negligence on the part of the firm, investors are only covered for money lost after August 27 1988, the date when the scheme was set up. However, where compensation is due simply because a firm has gone into liquidation, the claim may be backdated to December 18

1986, when the term "investment business" was first defined by the Financial Services Act.

This rather complicated structure was arrived at after a court case in January last year. Before then, the scheme had been reimbursing all losses, irrespective of when they were incurred, so long as the adviser was authorised.

The case had been brought by the Financial Intermediaries

investments made via a firm that has been fully authorised under the Financial Services Act. Investors who are in any doubt about a firm's status are advised to check it, either by telephoning the central register on 071-929 3652, or on Prestel.

The types of activity covered by the act include life assurance, unit trusts, investment-linked pensions, stocks and shares, and commodity

'People will not be compensated for losses suffered through the normal risks of investment'

ies, Managers and Brokers Regulatory Association (Fimbra), which had pressed hard for all compensation to be limited to losses incurred either after April 1988, when authorisation of businesses began, or, even better, after the date when the compensation scheme was set up.

The scheme only covers in-

and financial futures and options. General insurance, such as motor policies, are excluded. So are bank and building society deposits and physical property dealings such as houses, land, gold coins and antiques.

If a firm is solvent when it goes into liquidation, investors will normally be reim-

bursed by the liquidator. However, if this is likely to take a long time, the scheme may pay the investor and then make its own claim on the liquidator.

Before a claim can be made, the directors of the scheme must have declared the firm "in default". Registered clients are then contacted and given the address of officials handling claims on the collapsed firm. Any subsequent payment will be based on the value of investments on the date the firm is declared in default. This means that claimants could receive more, or less, than their original investment, depending on market movements.

The SIB says people will not be compensated for losses suffered through the normal risks of investment. For instance, people who follow advice to buy shares in a company that subsequently goes out of business are not normally protected.

Before the scheme started, investors with most firms would have been classed as unsecured creditors in the event of a default. This meant that they were near the back of the queue when any repayment from the firm's remaining assets was made.

*SIB may be contacted at: Gavrelle House, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8RA. Tel: 071 638 1240.

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Halifax insurance move criticised

PLANS by the Halifax building society to insure directors and officers against the actions of litigious activists and cranks have sparked strong resistance from some customers (Liz Dolan writes).

At the annual meeting next month, members will be asked to vote on a proposal to insure the society's directors and officers against legal claims for "negligence, default, breach of duty or breach of trust".

Basil Course, a Halifax customer, said: "I find it difficult to conceive of any change in the rules which could rate less in members' interests than this one. It is a free ticket to irresponsibility." Fellow member, Karen Firth, added: "Maybe I am missing the point here, but where is the incentive for the directors to take due care in performing their duties if they are to be insured against the consequences of their incompetence?"

Stephen Cockcroft, secretary to the society, is un-

moved. He said: "I can't agree with this point of view. If we treat customers badly, we lose them. No customers means no business."

"We see ourselves as following the modern pattern in this. These days, we appear to be importing the American style of litigation. It's really only as a safeguard against cranks and activists. On balance, I think it's worthwhile. If we don't do it, it would only be one more thing to worry about."

The proposal was prompted by a change in the rules governing building societies, that came into force in January. Previously, societies could take out insurance on behalf of employees, but not directors and officers.

Alliance & Leicester's top brass have been covered since the day the new regulations came into force. So have those of the Woolwich. Huw Alderman, the secretary, said: "It doesn't absolve directors from responsibility to the customers."

Health plan to increase charges

BY LIZ DOLAN

MEMBERS of private health schemes are likely to face further hefty premium rises this year. Roy Forman, managing director of Private Patients Plan, the second largest medical insurer, this week warned policyholders to expect "substantial" premium increases in July. This comes hard on the heels of rises of up to 36 per cent in January.

Mr Forman blamed a continuing escalation in claims, marketing and administration costs.

He said that the health insurance industry had been hit by an "unprecedentedly high" level of lapses in 1991, particularly in the second half. PPP suffered 128,500 lapses, three quarters of which came from company schemes that had either ceased trading altogether, or had severely cut back cover for employees. Two-thirds of the corporate lapses were small businesses hit by recession.

The British United Provident Association also reports a proportionately higher level of policy cancellations among corporate clients than among individuals. Most were small companies going out of business, it says.

The downturn in the economy has also affected the level of cover provided for members of corporate health schemes. Some companies,



unable to face recent steep increases in premiums, are either trading down to cheaper policies, or changing their insurers altogether.

Employees who are forced to change to a different health plan may find that they are not covered for medical conditions that were included in the previous scheme, because they came to light after the old plan came into effect. Insurers vary in how they deal with these pre-existing conditions.

Sun Alliance takes an uncompromising stance. John

Hollis, assistant manager, customer services, said that the workforce of a new client was always reassessed on an individual risk basis, however large the company involved.

Christopher Johnson, PPP strategic communications manager, said: "If companies switch to us from another insurer, we offer the choice of a 'no worse terms' basis. Nine out of ten take up the offer. The rest opt for exclusion of pre-existing conditions, which keeps costs down."

Peter Garrad-Cole, director of sales at Bupa, said that

companies transferring to a Bupa scheme were generally moved over on the same basis of cover, "although we reserve the right to underwrite where circumstances may have changed".

Norwich Union is one of the newest players in the healthcare market. David Cavers, managing director of NU Healthcare, said: "Large company schemes tend to be transferred on a 'no worse terms' basis... No one is penalised for developing problems since joining the previous scheme."

Barclaycard fee rises

BY SARA MCCONNELL

BARCLAYS is to increase the annual fee on its Barclaycard from £8 to £10 from this week.

New cardholders will pay the higher fee immediately, while the majority of existing cardholders will be charged the extra £2 from the anniversary of their first fee payment. They will receive notification of the fee change with their May statements.

The bank says it has been forced to raise the cost for its 8

million cardholders because of growing costs, particularly fraud. Fraud cost the bank £36 million last year.

An £8 fee was introduced by Barclays in June 1990. This is the first time it has been increased.

Barclaycards will be free to students and additional cardholders.

Lloyds, National Westminster and Midland all charge a £12 annual fee for their cards.

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Technology back on high

By RUPERT BRUCE

WHILE many industries have stood still in the world's recessions, the march of technology has carried on. Unit trusts investing in technology stocks are once more nudging the top of the performance tables.

This is a state of affairs not seen since 1983, in the heyday of the technology companies when the likes of IBM and Digital Equipment were growing rapidly and there were new companies springing up almost daily. It has been underscored by an 18-month rally in technology stocks in America, the home of most technology companies.

But in volatile technology stocks even the recent past is an unreliable guide to future performance. Nevertheless, some investment managers predict that the rally is set to continue, despite a fall in US technology stocks over the last month or so.

Michael Bourne, associate director of Prolific Asset Management and manager of the Prolific Technology Unit Trust, said: "Now you have recession on a world-wide basis, it is going to get much harder to make good money in blue chips, and so I think people are going to be looking around at technology."

The second half of the eighties was the era of the big blue chip, to the detriment of



Enthusiastic fund manager Michael Bourne

technology stocks. But now, even if America is pulling out of recession, the profits of big companies could lack lustre for some time while technology stocks prove more resilient.

Brian Ashford-Russell, who manages the SGTR Global Technology Fund, broadly agrees. He distinguishes between those stocks which are immune to the economic cycle and those which would benefit from any revival. He says the former are stocks in companies like medical equipment makers and low-price computer software, and the latter semi-conductor and computer components manufacturers generally. He expects stock market returns of around 25 per cent from the former, but a few stocks in the latter category could double within 18 months if American recovery gathers strength.

At Save & Prosper, John Haynes, fund manager of the New Technology Fund, predicts that smaller companies will do better than the industry's giants. "That is where you find the excitement and those companies will probably grow more quickly than the average," he said.

The greatest potential now is in the smaller, innovative technology companies which think up new products. These may be involved in comput-

ing, medicine, biotechnology, robotics or a number of other areas. But this is a high-risk investment game because it often involves buying shares in a company just as it is developing its only product and selling it before a rival starts to market a better one.

A lack of appreciation of the risk, coupled with over-optimistic expectations for the computer industry, led to the technology boom of the early eighties. When the bubble burst, it took seven years for the stocks to perform well again, and the number of technology unit trusts roughly halved.

But although technology stocks are back in favour, the funds are still volatile. Over March, the Hambrecht & Quist Growth Index, which measures the performance of technology stocks, fell more than 10 per cent in sterling terms, while the broad-based Standard & Poor's fell just over 2 per cent.

"Disaster for us is a stock dropping 50 per cent in a day. Disaster for my colleagues (managing non-technology funds) is a stock dropping 10 per cent," said Mr Ashford-Russell.

Although enthusiastic, Mr Bourne would not wish anyone to invest a lump sum in his fund today for fear of it falling sharply tomorrow. Instead, he advises that any investment in a technology fund should be made on a regular basis over a set time.

Survey points to lower bonuses

By LIZ DOLAN

BONUSES on with-profit endowment and other investment schemes linked to insurance are likely to remain lower in the nineties than in the eighties if predictions about inflation prove correct, according to the president of the Faculty of Actuaries.

In the forecast for the 1992 *EPR With Profits Survey*, out this week, Alistair Neil says: "It is suggested that entry into the European Community's exchange-rate mechanism may give a lower rate of future inflation. This may also mean that nominal investment earnings in the UK will be lower in the nineties than in the eighties. If this happens, we can expect a period of lower reversionary bonus rates and lower terminal bonus rates."

The annual survey, put together by Clay & Partners, the actuarial firm, showed that last year's fall in with-profit returns continues this year, especially for the shorter ten and 15-year terms.

Norwich Union, whose endowments are linked to, among others, Leeds Permanent mortgages, has made particularly savage cuts to bonus rates. This meant that the company fell several places in all four of the survey's performance tables for endowments, over 25, 20, 15 and ten years.

Over ten years, Commercial Union made the smallest reduction, 2.1 per cent, and NU the highest, 8.6 per cent. Over 15 years, NU was responsible for the largest cut, 8.6 per cent, while Friends Provident's return fell 0.5 per cent.

Guardian Royal Exchange, linked to Nationwide mortgages, was the worst performer over ten years, paying out 67.1 per cent of the return from Equitable Life, the top company. GRE was also worst performer over 15 years. Equitable Life paid the highest terminal bonus over ten years, of 41.1 per cent, and came within 0.1 per cent of Equity & Law's 47.4 per cent over 15 years.

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GA sells direct on house insurance

By SARA MCCONNELL

HOUSEHOLDERS could save up to 20 per cent on contents insurance and up to 15 per cent on buildings insurance from General Accident if they buy their policies directly from the company, rather than through a broker, bank or building society.

Three new contents policies and two new buildings policies are being offered only through General Accident One-to-One, the company's direct marketing arm. Martin Butler, GA's Direct home insurance manager,

said that a policyholder with a two or three-bedroom suburban house in an area with a low risk of subsidence could expect to pay between £1.25 per £1,000 of cover and £2.75 per £1,000 of cover for buildings insurance through GA One-to-One instead of between £1.60 and £2.80 per £1,000 of cover for GA's standard policy. Homes in areas with a higher risk of subsidence would have their cover underwritten locally.

The saving on contents insurance for the same two to

three-bedroom house could be as much as 20 per cent but in some cases could be "marginally more expensive".

There are three contents policies, Property Plan, Property Plan Plus and Property Plan Deluxe. Premiums are based on the number of bedrooms and will replace items on a new for old basis. The Plus and Deluxe policies offer full accidental loss and damage cover. Of the two buildings insurance policies, the Deluxe policy also offers cover for accidental damage.

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*1% discount on a PEP investment of £6,000 currently represents a saving of £70.50 including VAT. The value of a PEP and the income from it may go down as well as up and the investor may not get back the amount invested. Tax assumptions may be subject to future statutory change and the value of tax savings will depend on individual circumstances. Fidelity Share Exchange Service is offered by Fidelity Investment Services Limited, a member of IMRO and LAUTRO. Backed by Fidelity Nominees Limited, a member of IMRO.

The Ascent of the Smaller Company.



The outlook is good for the UK stockmarket. Pre-election uncertainty is being replaced by a renewed sense of direction for businesses and a new wave of optimism from investors.

Few areas of business are in a better position to capitalise on these developments than the UK's smaller companies.

A New Fund For Smaller UK Companies.

At Perpetual, we're confident that smaller UK companies are poised for a period of growth. That's why we're launching the Perpetual UK Smaller Companies Fund, which will concentrate on prime performers worth up to £200 million.

Just like UK smaller companies, Perpetual's history of performance is particularly successful. Our UK Department already enjoys a top-quartile ranking for its UK Growth Fund since launch - just part of Perpetual's impressive track record which culminated in our being awarded The Sunday Times International Unit Trust Manager of the Year in 1991.

Smaller Companies. Big Potential.

Why do smaller companies have such potential? For one thing, they are inherently flexible. They can adapt positively to changes and developments in consumer demand, altering their approach more readily than unwieldy larger contenders. For another, smaller companies mean smaller overheads. Indeed many have entered the post-election period armed with significant cash resources. And of course, smaller companies have strong potential for rapid growth - particularly in a positive economic climate.

Powerful Performance.

If you look at the performance history of smaller UK companies, the facts speak for themselves. Over the last 37 years, the Hoare Govett Smaller Companies Index, which mainly covers companies worth up to £200 million, has outperformed the FT All Share Index by an average of 4.5% a year.

Clearly, careful selection of star performers can prove to be a formula for investment success.

Introductory Offer.

Investing in UK smaller companies NOW represents a significant opportunity... and so does our introductory offer. To mark the launch of the Perpetual UK Smaller Companies Fund, we're offering you a 1% Discount in the form of additional units. But hurry! This offer is only available during the one-week launch period (8th-15th May 1992). So contact Andrew Brownlough on 0491 417221, or send for a prospectus today.

Remember that the price of units and the income from them can go down as well as up, and that past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. *Includes gross reversionary income. Source: Hoare Govett.

To Perpetual Unit Trust Management Limited, 48 Horn Street, Hove, Brighton BN1 3AF. Tel: 0491 417221. Please send me a prospectus on the new Perpetual UK Smaller Companies Fund. (Please enclose a cheque for £10.)

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No.	Company	Share	Dividend
1	Shell	100	1.00
2	BP	100	1.00
3	British Petroleum	100	1.00
4	British Gas	100	1.00
5	British Telecom	100	1.00
6	British Airways	100	1.00
7	British Airways	100	1.00
8	British Airways	100	1.00
9	British Airways	100	1.00
10	British Airways	100	1.00
11	British Airways	100	1.00
12	British Airways	100	1.00
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43	British Airways	100	1.00
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45	British Airways	100	1.00
46	British Airways	100	1.00
47	British Airways	100	1.00
48	British Airways	100	1.00
49	British Airways	100	1.00
50	British Airways	100	1.00

Please take into account any minus signs

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	Week

There were no valid claims for the Portfolio Platinum prize yesterday. The £4,000 will be added to Monday's competition.

1992 Low Company Price + - % YTD % P/E

BANKS, DISCOUNT, HP

1992 Low Company	Price	+ -	% YTD	% P/E
1	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
2	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
3	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
4	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
5	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
6	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
7	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
8	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
9	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
10	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
11	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
12	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
13	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
14	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
15	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
16	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
17	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
18	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
19	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
20	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
21	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
22	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
23	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
24	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
25	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
26	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
27	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
28	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
29	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
30	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
31	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
32	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
33	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
34	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
35	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
36	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
37	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
38	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
39	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
40	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
41	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
42	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
43	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
44	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
45	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
46	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
47	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
48	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
49	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
50	100	1.00	1.00	1.00

BREWERIES

1992 Low Company	Price	+ -	% YTD	% P/E
1	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
2	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
3	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
4	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
5	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
6	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
7	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
8	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
9	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
10	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
11	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
12	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
13	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
14	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
15	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
16	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
17	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
18	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
19	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
20	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
21	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
22	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
23	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
24	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
25	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
26	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
27	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
28	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
29	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
30	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
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32	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
33	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
34	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
35	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
36	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
37	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
38	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
39	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
40	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
41	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
42	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
43	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
44	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
45	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
46	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
47	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
48	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
49	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
50	100	1.00	1.00	1.00

BUILDING, ROADS

1992 Low Company	Price	+ -	% YTD	% P/E
1	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
2	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
3	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
4	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
5	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
6	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
7	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
8	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
9	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
10	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
11	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
12	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
13	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
14	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
15	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
16	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
17	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
18	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
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21	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
22	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
23	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
24	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
25	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
26	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
27	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
28	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
29	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
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31	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
32	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
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34	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
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36	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
37	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
38	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
39	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
40	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
41	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
42	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
43	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
44	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
45	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
46	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
47	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
48	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
49	100	1.00	1.00	1.00
50	100	1.00	1.00	1.00

Buoyant end to account

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings began April 6. Dealings ended yesterday. Settlement day May 5. Forward bargains are permitted on two previous business days. Prices recorded are at market close. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1992 Low Company Price + - % YTD % P/E

3963	1	NYNEX	1282	-37	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.
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THE TIMES SATURDAY APRIL 25 1992

[illegible]

WEEKEND TIMES

SATURDAY APRIL 25 1992

Jonathon Porritt salutes the 'ordinary people' who spend their lives protecting our future

On March 17, the contractors commissioned by the Department of Transport to start work on the M3 extension outside Winchester moved their bulldozers on to the River Itchen Site of Special Scientific Interest. A small group of local protesters looked on in despair. Despite the best efforts of both local campaigners and Friends of the Earth, "the juggernauts of progress" had arrived to rip the heart out of this precious place.

And then, unplanned, unthinkable, Jeremy Middleton, with his two-year-old son, Ben, in his arms, advanced on the nearest bulldozer to stop it in its tracks. The rest quickly thronged around him, climbing on the blade and the roof of the cab, momentarily halting what they saw as an act of desecration. Quizzed by reporters, Mr Middleton found it hard to explain what had happened. "I acted out of sheer frustration, and others just followed me on to the site to show their strength of feeling."

Within a couple of hours, they were all moved on by the police, the work continued, and whatever it was that made this tiny patch of countryside "special" was obliterated for ever. But the image of Mr Middleton, embracing in his arms the interests of future generations, stays with me.

Being a full-time environmentalist is a funny business. It's not easy keeping your pecker up. For one thing, there is a never-ending stream of doom and gloom about the state of the Earth which one can afford to dip into but never get immersed in. A lot of environmental problems are indisputably getting worse. Whether you are talking of water shortages or waste mountains, too little ozone or too much carbon dioxide, the decline in our life-support systems and in the well-being of Planet Earth has not yet bottomed out.

Equally, a lot of environmentalists seem to have an almost pathological aversion to good news. They are only able to maintain positively heroic work schedules on regular fixes of bad news. These days, that leaves a lot of observers completely unmoved. In the business of going green, what people need is practical help, and perhaps even humour, rather than another sermon on expiating their ecological sins.

Which is why I find myself increasingly drawn to those people who just get on and do it, who put their environmental beliefs into daily practice, come what may, without too much regard for the others who dismiss their endeavours as forlorn. Mr Middleton almost certainly knew that his gesture was forlorn, but he made it for all that, and the resonance of it still rings out.

Over the past few years, I have got to know a lot of the troops who make up this "thin green line" that stands between us and the destruction of life-support systems. They are easy for cynical commentators to caricature — as tree-hugging, mud-splunging, middle-class dogooders painfully recycling their guilt along with their *Guardians*, and political desperados intent on reversing industrial progress. Sorry to disappoint you, but they're not like that at all.

Indeed, the 12 "green warriors" we eventually settled on as the subjects for Channel 4's new series, *How to Save the Earth*, provide scant pickings for the caricaturists. For the most part, they are regular men and women transformed with varying degrees of reluctance into environmental campaigners.

That element of reluctance is important. Until 1977, Lois Gibbs was (by her own acknowledgment) a more or less average American housewife enjoying a more or less average suburban lifestyle. It just so happened that that suburb was Love Canal, near Niagara Falls.



The green guerrillas

where her house had been built on top of a landfill site jam-packed with toxic chemical waste. As she saw more and more children born with deformities or dying prematurely, Ms Gibbs was drawn into the campaign for resettlement and compensation, and soon became its public voice.

Protecting your children, defending your own patch, is how millions of people first get involved in environmental activity. But what makes Ms Gibbs more interesting is that, having won the local campaign at Love Canal, she didn't settle for another average American suburb somewhere else, but went on campaigning against the toxic waste industry. In 1981, she set up the Citizen's Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes, which has provided advice and assistance to more than 7,000 communities across the United States which find themselves threatened by toxic waste problems. Like charity, ecology often begins at home, but once you have made the start, it doesn't take long to realise that, as far as the workings of Planet Earth are concerned, we all live in the same back yard.

Klara Benkovicova's immediate back yard is the Danube. She comes from a small rural community on the Czechoslovak side of Europe's greatest river, and is now a volunteer organiser for Euro-chain, a group set up to protest against the construction of the Gabčíkovo Dam on the Danube.

Before 1989, dissent carried a heavy price. Any Czechoslovak equivalent of Mr Middleton would have been jailed and systematically persecuted. There was some opposition to the Gabčíkovo Dam even then, but mostly underground.

Ms Benkovicova's world was turned on its head by the overthrow of the communist regime in Czechoslovakia's "velvet revolution" in 1989. She and her colleagues took advantage of the new freedom to bring the issue of Gabčíkovo (which will cause terrible damage to the Danube and its inland delta) to the top of the agenda.

Her commitment is impressive. In 1990 she gave up her secure job as a teacher to devote herself full-time to the campaign. On one

occasion, she and her colleagues commandeered an unoccupied house, tapped illegally into an outside phone line, and spent four days raising support for a huge demonstration from environmental organisations in Czechoslovakia and around the world.

Here again, what looks like a classic protest against something has turned into a campaign for something — in this case, energy efficiency. Per capita energy consumption in Czechoslovakia is about 15 per cent higher than western European averages. Euro-chain accuses the new Czechoslovak government (which intends to complete the controversial dam) of inheriting the communists' blind attachment to increasing energy supply without thinking of energy

use. It has produced figures showing how Czechoslovakia could dramatically reduce its overall energy use, particularly through the modernisation of its antediluvian industries.

Campaigns of this kind are almost timeless. The thin, green line has been out there defending the natural world for centuries, sometimes with success, more often not. After 30 years' campaigning on behalf of countless local and national causes, David Bellamy recalls, rather wearily, how he first raised the banner of protest in the 1960s against the destruction by modern farming techniques of wildflower meadows and wetlands in southern England. In these days of beef mountains and milk lakes, much of that marginal farming

land is now judged to be "surplus to requirements". Mr Bellamy is now patron of all sorts of organisations conscientiously restoring the wetlands and re-sowing the wildflowers back into the meadows.

Faced with such aberrational behaviour, all greens inevitably go through periodic crises when they seriously doubt their own sanity. Given the weight of firm evidence about our dependence on the natural world and the extent to which it is at risk, how is it that so many apparently rational people can continue to ignore the writing on the wall?

How many blind eyes must be turned before reality finally overwhelms us? Day after day, throughout the general election campaign, I waited in expectation for just one comment about the environment. But I waited in vain. Even Michael Heseltine, then at the Department of the Environment, managed to get through a whole hour on Radio 4's *Election Call* without once referring to any of today's most pressing environmental issues. Is it any wonder that I was seriously questioning my sanity by the end of it all?

Perhaps we should accept that these old-world dinosaurs can't cope, and that even the threat of imminent extinction may not be sufficient to persuade them to adapt. If that is the case, all the pressure groups in the world may be a waste of energy until evolution takes its natural course. I don't

believe that. Now, with the election behind us, we can concentrate on the historic Earth Summit in Brazil in June, and the Prince of Wales's speech to leading environmentalists this week has focused our thoughts on the protection of the planet for future generations. But most important, we will always have those green warriors who devote themselves to changing the system, not so much by applying external pressure to it as by building practical alternatives within it.

These are the green shoots that keep sprouting from the wasteland of urban industrialism. They are often incredibly vulnerable, and many of them wither away or are crushed underfoot before they have had a chance to get established. But many survive, bringing enormous encouragement and inspiration to the rest of us as we try to persuade ourselves that we're sane, after all.

There is no better example of this than Dr Melaku Worede, an Ethiopian scientist who became Director of the Plant Genetic Resources Centre in Addis Ababa at the height of the worst excesses of the former Dergue regime. Unlike most western experts who occasionally drop in on Ethiopia, Dr Worede believes that the best way of helping that country's farmers is to value their traditional knowledge and to work with them instead of treating them like ignorant peasants. The highlands of Ethiopia is one of the richest and most genetically diverse grain-growing areas in the world. Dr Worede and his colleagues have devoted themselves to protecting that diversity, sowing seeds to rescue crop species from extinction, and building up strategic seed reserves for distribution to farmers at times of drought.

Looking back over the people whose work we featured in the series, my favourite green warrior was Phra Ajaan Pongsak, a Buddhist monk who has devoted his life to restoring the watershed forests of the Mae So Valley in northern Thailand. He is a lovely man to meet, with a beatific smile that lights up everyone and everything around him.

What struck me most forcefully was the spiritual authority behind everything he says and does: "Our parents gave us life, but the forest sustains it. From it, we get the four necessities of life: food, shelter, clothing, medicine. It balances the air we breathe, cleanses the water we drink, produces the soil we grow our crops in. It nourishes the spirit in the same way as it nourishes the body. We should be endlessly grateful to it — every grove, every tree, every leaf."

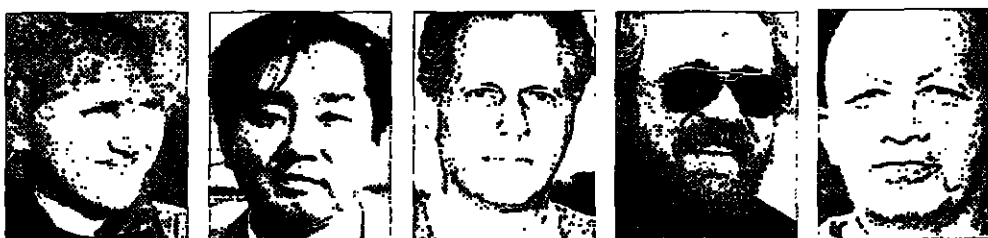
How I'd love to be able to talk about forests and woodlands in such terms here. But there is nothing whimsical in the way Phra Ajaan Pongsak goes about his business: providing local villagers with enough land to persuade them to leave the forest untouched; rehabilitating degraded land; building new catchment dams, regenerating the forest through selective replanting; taking on the might of several international agencies intent on cutting down the forests to enable refugees from over the border in Burma to plant acacia after acres of cabbagees — for sale to the Japanese.

The forests of Mae So will never be entirely safe from such agencies, any more than Sites of Special Scientific Interest here in the UK will be safe from the bulldozers of the Department of Transport. But across the world, people like Phra Ajaan Pongsak, Lois Gibbs, Klara Benkovicova and Jeremy Middleton are not just defending their own back yards. They are upholding a different set of values, and putting into practice a different relationship between themselves and the rest of life on Earth. And that is what makes these green warriors so important to the rest of us.

● *How To Save The Earth* runs its 4-episode run on Channel 4 on May 5 at 8pm. Accompanying it is the paperback edition of Porritt's book *Save The Earth* (Dorling Kindersley, £12.99).

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UNLIKELY HEROES: some of the green guerrillas featured in *How to Save the Earth*. From left: Klara Benkovicova, a Czech schoolteacher turned environmental activist; Joichi Kuroda, of the Japanese Tropical Forest Action Network; Eric Mann, anti-motor industry campaigner; Jens Ole-Hojmann, of Greenpeace; Phra Ajaan Pongsak, seeding a new forest

THE MIAOUCALLAN?

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FILM

LA BELLE NOISEUSE (18): Fascinating two-hour digest of Jacques Rivette's epic about the painter, his model and an unfinished canvas. With Michel Piccoli, Emmanuelle Béart. Minimax (071-235 4225).

BROADWAY BOUND (PG): Neil Simon's alter ego, Eugene, takes the plunge as a professional writer. Fat performances (Anne Bancroft, Hume Cronyn), but thin cinema. Director, Paul Bogart. Screen on the Hill (071-435 3366).



Peter Weller: writer-hero of the weird *Naked Lunch*

BUGSY (18): Warren Beatty as the gangster who invented Las Vegas. Sleek, witty, dazzling to behold. Starring Annette Bening; director, Barry Levinson. MGM Chelsea (071-352 5096) MGM Haymarket (071-839 1527) Odeons Kensington (0426 914666) Mezzanine (0426 915683).

CAPE FEAR (18): Demonic ex-con Robert De Niro terrorises Nick Nolte and family. Martin Scorsese's ferocious remake of a classic revenge thriller. With Jessica Lange, Juliette Lewis. Empire (071-497 9999) MGM Fulham Road (071-370 2636) MGM Trocadero (071-434 0031) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

DECEIVED (15): Goldie Hawn as the wife who doubts her husband's identity. Psychological thriller, weak on story, but strong on atmosphere. Stars John Heard; director, Damien Harris. Odeons Kensington (0426 914666) Mezzanine (0426 915683) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

THE DOCTOR (12): Callous surgeon (William Hurt) goes under the knife and becomes a better person. Familiar material, but lively treatment. Director, Randa Haines. Camden Parkway (071-267 7034) Odeons Kensington (0426 914666) West End (0426 915574) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

THE DOUBLE LIFE OF VERONIQUE (15): Krzysztof Kieslowski's brilliantly filmed conundrum about two girls (one Polish, one French) who seem to share a life. With Irène Jacob, Philippe Volter. Curzon Mayfair (071-465 8865).

FRIED GREEN TOMATOES AT THE WHISTLE STOP CAFE (12): Heart-warming lives of feisty folks down South. Shallow, but ingratiating. With Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, Mary Stuart Masterson; director, Jon Arnet. Odeons Kensington (0426 914666) Mezzanine (0426 915683) Screen on Baker Street (071-935 2772) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE (15): Psychotic nanny (Rebecca De Mornay) wreaks revenge on a squeaky-clean family. Formula thriller with robust acting. Annabella Sciorra; director, Curtis Hanson. Camden Parkway (071-267 7034) MGM Chelsea (071-352 5096) MGM Oxford Street (071-636 0310) Odeons Kensington (0426 914666) West End (0426 915574) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

HIGH HEELS (18): Lukavarm, talkative melodrama of family secrets from Spain's master of camp, Pedro Almodóvar. With Victoria Abril and María Paredes. MGM Chelsea (071-352 5096) MGM Piccadilly (071-437 3561) Renoir (071-637 8402) Screen on Baker Street (071-935 2772).

HOOK (U): Grown-up Peter Pan returns to Neverland to fight Captain Hook. Much kid-pleasing spectacle, but little magic. With Robin Williams, Dustin Hoffman; director, Steven Spielberg. Barbican (071-638 8891) MGM Baker Street (071-935 2772) MGM Chelsea (071-352 5096) Odeons Kensington (0426 914666) Leicester Square (0426 915683) Marble Arch (0426 914501) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

KIKUICHI Days in the barren life of a laundry attendant. Quiet, hilarious minimalist exercise from Japanese comic-strip illustrator Kenji Yamoto. ICA (071-930 3647).

MY OWN PRIVATE IDAHO (18): Gus Van Sant's quirky portrait of two drifters searching for a home: striking and aggravating by turns. With River Phoenix, Keanu Reeves. MGM Fulham Road (071-370 2636) MGM Piccadilly (071-437 3561) MGM Shaftesbury Avenue (071-836 6279/79 7025) MGM Trocadero (071-434 0031).

0031) Morning Hill Coronet (071-727 6705).

NAKED LUNCH (18): A film like no other, skilfully carved from William Burroughs's novel by director David Cronenberg. Peter Weller as the writer-hero in a drug-induced tangle of the mind. With Judy Davis, Ian Holm. Camden Plaza (071-485 2443) Gate (071-727 4043) MGM Shaftesbury Avenue (071-836 6279/79 7025) Screen on the Green (071-226 3520).

REBECCA'S DAUGHTERS (12): Unwieldy comic romp from a Dylan Thomas script about injustice and rebellion in 19th century Wales. With Peter O'Toole; director, Karl Francis. Odeon Haymarket (0426 915353).

RICOCHET (18): Escaped prisoner John Lithgow attempts to ruin assistant D.A. Denzel Washington. Cruel, excessive thriller that makes *Cape Fear* look like *Wild Strawberries*. Director, Russell Mulcahy. MGM Fulham Road (071-370 2636) MGM Haymarket (071-839 1527) MGM Oxford Street (071-636 0310) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

STOP! OR MY MOM WILL SHOOT (PG): Pesteering mum Estelle Getty comes to visit her bachelor-cop son Sylvester Stallone. Threadbare comedy for the easily pleased, directed by Roger Spottiswood. Empire (071-497 9999) MGM Baker Street (071-935 2772) MGM Fulham Road (071-370 2636) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

TIME WILL TELL (15): Documentary about reggae king Bob Marley's life, music and beliefs, featuring 22 songs, plus rehearsal and interview footage. Director, Dedan Lowmy. Prince Charles (071-437 8181).

UNTIL THE END OF THE WORLD (15): Wim Wenders's ambitious, hugely flawed, globe-trotting blend of road movie, romance and science-fiction. With Solveig Dommartin, William Hurt. Lumière (071-836 0691).

VOYAGER (15): Strange coincidences and a pretty girl derail the life of a globe-trotting engineer (Sam Shepard). Subtle, absorbing version of Max Frisch's novel, *Homo Faber*; director, Volker Schlöndorff. Curzon West End (071-439 4805).

THEATRE

LONDON

ANGELS IN AMERICA: Thrilling performances in Tony Kushner's fascinating state-of-the-Union drama on AIDS, religion, politics, everything. National (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). Tonight, Mon, 7.15pm, mat today, 2.30pm.

AS YOU LIKE IT: Emma Redgrave and Philip Francis stride off to the Forest of Arden to discover the ways of love. Greenwich, Croom's Hill, SE10 (081-858 7755). Previews from Thurs, 7.45pm; opens May 4.

FRIED GREEN TOMATOES AT THE WHISTLE STOP CAFE (12): Heart-warming lives of feisty folks down South. Shallow, but ingratiating. With Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, Mary Stuart Masterson; director, Jon Arnet. Odeons Kensington (0426 914666) Mezzanine (0426 915683) Screen on Baker Street (071-935 2772) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

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John Malkovich: starring in *A Slip of the Tongue*

BERLIN BERTIE: Howard Brenton's sharp though muddled critique of the new Europe where a social worker, a trusting wife and a spy have lost their bearings. With Penny Downie, Diana Rigg and Nicholas Woodson. Royal Court, Sloane Square, SW1 (071-730 1745). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Sat, 4pm.

LE BOURGEOIS GENTILHOMME: Timothy Spall as the dedicated follower of fashion in a strongly-cast production by Richard Jones. National (Lyttelton), South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). Previews from Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.15pm; opens May 5.

THE COTTON CLUB: An impression of the Harlem nightclub high on energy, low on story freshness. Aldwych, WC2 (071-836 6404). Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, Sat, 8pm, mat Wed, 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm.

DEATH AND THE MAIDEN: Two new cast members, Geraldine James and Paul Freeman, join Michael Byrne in this superb play on the longing for revenge. Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-836 5122). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Thurs, 3pm, Sat, 4pm.

HEARTBREAK HOUSE: Paul Scofield and Vanessa Redgrave head the splendid cast in Shaw's timeless, state-of-the-England drama, directed by Trevor Nunn. Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1 (071-930 8800). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm.



Libertating a classic: John Rath as the dramatic Mikado in the "new" D'Oyly Carte's unorthodox production of the Gilbert and Sullivan opera

matr Wed, Sat, 2.30pm.

HENRY IV, PART 2: Michael Maloney's Prince Hal gives Falstaff (Robert Stephens) the brush-off and goes off to become Henry V. Grand performances. Barbican, Barbican Centre, EC2 (071-638 8891). Previews from Thurs, 7.30pm; opens May 7.

MURMURING JUDGES: David Hare, tackling our rotting legal system, delivers skilful blows with his customary wit and passion. National (Olivier), South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). Today 2pm and 7.15pm.

NEEDLES AND OPIUM: Lepage's one-man, multi-media show, straddling the decades, with Miles Davis and Jean Cocteau among the characters. National (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). Opens Thurs, 8pm; then in repertoire.

PYGMALION: Alan Howard, Frances Barber in a Howard Davies production that some admire greatly while others feel subordinates the text to a clever design. National (Olivier), South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). Fri, next Sat, 7.15pm, mat next Sat, 2pm.

REFLECTED GLORY: Albert Finney witty as the victim of a play by his brother, Stephen Moore; after this good start Ronald Harwood's new comedy peters out. Vaudeville, The Strand, WC2 (071-936 9987). Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, matr Wed, 2.30pm, Sat, 5pm.

A SLIP OF THE TONGUE: John Malkovich plays a Lithuanian dissident involved with four students in this new Duff Hughes drama; multi-national cast in a Steppenwolf production from Chicago. Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2 (071-379 5399). Previews from Tues-Thurs, 8pm, Fri, 6pm and 9pm, next Sat, 4.30pm and 8.30pm; opens May 11.

'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE: Saskia Reeves, Jonathan Cullen, Jonathan Hyde in vigorously bloody production of Ford's incest tragedy. The Pit, Barbican Centre, EC2 (071-638 8891). Previews from Thurs, 7.30pm; opens May 6.

REGIONAL

BRISTOL: The season closes with *Blue Remembered Hills*, Dennis Potter's moving drama of children's games that end in disaster. Seven adults play the children. Theatre Royal, King Street (0272 250250). Preview Wed 7.30pm; opens Thurs 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Thurs, Sat, 2.30pm.

MANCHESTER: Couples discover doubts about marriage in *Women Laughing*, ironic comedy by the late Michael Walby, author of the excellent *Amongst Barbarians*. Royal Exchange, St Ann's Square (061-833 9833). Preview Wed, 7.30pm; opens Thurs, 7.30pm; then Mon-Thurs, 7.30pm, Fri, Sat, 8pm, mat Wed, 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm.

GLASGOW: Spring season concludes with *Other Places*, triple-bill of Pinter shorts (Third Theatre), *The Hypochondriacs*, Botho Strauss's 1972 dark comedy on love, murder and free expression (Second Theatre), and Laurence Radic in the Brecht/Marlowe *Edward II* (First Theatre).

CITIZENS, Gorbals (041-429 0022). *Other Places*, previews Tues, opens Wed; *The Hypochondriacs*, previews Wed, opens Thurs; *Edward II*, previews Thurs, opens Fri. All performances Mon-Sat, 7.30pm.

DANCE

CINDERELLA: English National Ballet presents the premiere of Ben Stevenson's production of Prokofiev's *Cinderella*. This is actually a revised version of the choreographer's original 1970 production, which happened to be the first full-length ballet Stevenson choreographed. There are new sets and costumes from David Walker, known for his fairytale-pretty designs. Wednesday's opening night cast features Maria Theresia Del Real as the kitchen maid-turned-princess, with José Manuel Carreno as her prince. Mayflower Theatre, Commercial Road, Southampton (0703 229771). Wed-Sat, 7.30pm, matr Thurs, 2.30pm.

THE TURNING WORLD: This annual season of international dance turns its attention to France this week with return visits from the French troupes, Ballet du Fagistart and Compagnie Claude Brumachon. The Brazilian-born Brigitte Farges, known for her sculptural imagery, is presenting the British premiere of her new piece, *Adore et j'en veux plus*, which was created during a residency in Tel Aviv. Brumachon's *Le Palais des vents* is bound to outrage some: passion, sensuousness and eroticism are on the menu for this one. The Place Theatre, 17 Duke's Road, London WC1 (071-387 0031). Ballet du Fagistart, tonight, 8pm. Compagnie Claude Brumachon, Tues, Wed, 8pm.

MUSIC

CLASSICAL

LA SCALA PHILHARMONIC: The latest orchestra to feature in the Barbican's Great Orchestras of the World series is rather less well-known than some of the others — at least in the repertoire on offer here — and is making its British debut. The orchestra was founded on the initiative of Claudio Abbado in 1982, in an attempt to broaden the repertoire of the famous opera house orchestra. It has since formed a close association with Carlo Maria Giulini, who conducts it here in two of the Beethoven symphonies they are currently recording together (Nos 3 and 8). Barbican Hall, Silk Street, London EC2, (071-638 8891), Mon, 7.45pm.

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: A busy and varied week for the LSO under Michael Tilson Thomas: tomorrow they play Mahler's Ninth Symphony, preceded by Mozart's Wind Serenade No 10; Thursday has Leonard Bernstein's Suite from *A Quiet Place* with Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No 3 (with Vladimir Feltsman the soloist) and Prokofiev's Suite from *Romeo and Juliet*.

BARBICAN HALL, Silk Street, London EC2, (071-638 8891), Sun, 7.30pm; Thurs, 7.45pm.

THIRD MANCHESTER INTERNATIONAL CELLO FESTIVAL: The festival is a biennial event, conceived by American cellist and RCM tutor Ralph Kirshbaum. Intended to honour the memories of Pierre Fournier and Jacqueline Du Pré by raising money for charities in their name, it offers students and enthusiasts an opportunity to study with and listen to some of the world's greatest cellists. Those taking part this year include Wolfgang Boettcher, Robert Cohen, Julian Lloyd Webber, Mischa Maisky and Moray Welsh. The opening concert on Thursday features seven cellists playing with the BBC Philharmonic under Raymond Leppard. RCM, 124 Oxford Road,

Manchester (061-273 4504), Thurs-next Sun.

OPERA

OPERA FACTORY: David Freeman completes his impressive cycle of Monteverdi operas with a new production of *The Coronation of Poppaea*. The cast includes Maria Angel as Poppaea, Janis Kelly as Octavia and Nigel Robson as Nero. Freeman's earlier productions of *Orfeo* and *The Return of Ulysses* can both be seen again this spring at the Coliseum.

GILBERT AND SULLIVAN: Last season the "new" D'Oyly Carte Company (now in its fifth year) succeeded in amending G&S traditions with stagings that tried to liberate the works from the attic in which some seemed to want them preserved for ever. This week, as part of the longest tour it has ever undertaken, the company travels from Birmingham to London's Sadler's Wells with new productions of *The Mikado* and *The Yeomen of the Guard*, both directed by Andrew Wickes.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND, Birmingham (021-633 3325), tonight, 2.30pm and 7.30pm (*Mikado*), Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue, EC1 (071-278 8916), Tues, 7.30pm, Wed, 2.30pm and 7.30pm (*The Mikado*); Thurs, Fri, 7.30pm (*The Yeomen of the Guard*).

ROCK

LEVELLERS: The anarchic minstrel provide a frenetic and joyful live sound combining folk acoustic violins and a driving rock beat. Following this extensive tour, which finishes up at London's Britton Academy on May 15, the band will mount large at the Glastonbury Festival in June.

Bankers, Aberdeen (0224 581135), Wed, 7pm. **Barrowlands**, Glasgow (041-552 4601), Fri, 7.30pm.

Country living: Michelle Shocked goes on tour

MICHELLE SHOCKED: Currently paying her dues to country fiddle music in her latest album *Arkansas Traveler*, Shocked embarks on her first tour for 10 years.

University, Cardiff (0222 396421), Thurs, 7.30pm. **Town Hall, Birmingham** (021-236 2392), Fri, 7pm.

CHER: The singer looks set to bring some cinematic spectacle to her musical performances, and with her powerful voice she has a great deal more to offer than her lady sex goddess image would suggest. **The Point**, Dublin (010 3531 363633), Mon, 7pm. **Kings Hall, Belfast** (0232 665225), Tues, 7pm. **SECC, Glasgow** (041-248 3000), Thurs and Fri, 6.30pm.

JAZZ

ORNETTE COLEMAN & PRIME TIME: Presently enjoying attention for his musical contribution to Cronenberg's *Naked Lunch*, this catalyst of the free jazz movement and tireless innovator is touring for the first time with his new-look band, Prime Time. **Town Hall, Birmingham** (021-236 2392), tomorrow, 8pm. **Queen's Hall, Edinburgh** (031-668 2019), Mon, 8pm. **Free Trade Hall, Manchester** (061-231-235 7110), Tues, 7.30pm. **Royal Festival Hall, London** SE1 (071-928 8800), Wed, 7.30pm.

DAVID MURRAY QUARTET: The saxophonists seem to have been rarely out of the recording studio recently, so it's good to see him back on the road peddling anything from homages to the Ellington tenor Paul Gonzales to avant-garde compositions of his own. **Ronnie Scott's, Birmingham** (021-643 4523), Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri, 8pm.

EXHIBITIONS

PIRATES: Even without (or in spite of) Steven Spielberg's latest movie contribution to the theme, pirates seem to have a perennial appeal to the imagination. The new show at the National Maritime Museum judiciously balances pirates of fiction, from Captain Hook and Long John Silver down, with pirates of fact, such as Henry Morgan, Captain Kidd and Blackbeard. Original illustrations to the fiction and a setting for *Peter Pan* by no less a figure than Sir Edward Lutyens jostle portraits and documentary relics of the real thing. National heroes like Sir Francis Drake are included as well as hisisable villains.

National Maritime Museum, Greenwich SE10 (081-858 4422), Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm, Sun, 10am-6pm, opens Fri until Sept 6.

CREATIVE EYE 1992: Organised by the Crafts Council, *Creative Eye* is an annual forum for Britain's leading artists and craftsmen, including makers of ceramics, glass, jewellery, fabrics, furniture, and fine metalwork, as well as all sorts of indefinable cross breedings encouraged by today's increasingly fluid distinctions between fine art and craft, craft and applied art. The show usually confirms that a lot of the most powerful and inventive artwork straddles the borders.

Chelsea Old Town Hall, King's Road, SW3 (071-278 7700), Daily, 10am-6pm, opens Thurs until May 4.

HOLBEIN ACQUISITION: The National Gallery's latest acquisition is a charming portrait by Hans Holbein the Younger of *A Lady with a Squirrel and a Starling*, characteristic in style but unusual in subject matter, since Holbein rarely painted women unless they were royal. This particular lady seems (to judge from costume) to be English, but no closer identification has proved possible. The picture cost £10m by private treaty sale, and is shown alone for a month, in the NG boardroom, before joining the gallery's two other Holbeins in the general collection.

National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, London WC2 (071-839-3321), Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm, Sun, 2-6pm, from Tues.

OTTO DODD: The German painter is known in this country by a few paintings from his "critical realist" phase. This retrospective shows that he began with innocuous self-portraits, was shocked into Expressionist violence and Dada savagery by the first world war, and ended the Twenties as an adherent of the Neue Sachlichkeit (new objectivity), using probing realism to embody social criticisms. During the Nazi

Evenings Out

MAGGIE GEE, AUTHOR OF "WHERE ARE THE SNOWS"



"I would love to go to the Rembrandt exhibition at the National Gallery. I think all people who do creative things are fascinated and appalled by an artist who is successful and then declines into neglect. I would go and see *The Skeleton at the Feast* — *The Day of the Dead* in Mexico at the Museum of Mankind again. On November 1 and 2 in Mexico the dead are supposed to come back to earth and the living decorate graveyards and give great dances to celebrate. It's a cheerful festival, and the exhibition is brilliantly colourful and macabre. I want to take my five-year-old daughter to see *Hook*. We've just been reading *Peter Pan* and she adores it, and I like Dustin Hoffman who plays *Hook*."

Film: Geoff Brown: Theatre: Jeremy Kingston: Classical Music and Jazz: Brunsell: Rock and Jazz: Stephanie Osborne. Dance: Debra Crane. Exhibitions: John Russell Taylor. Videos: Geoff Brown. Bookings: Kan Knight. Salerooms: Huon Mallatieu.

period he found refuge in religious painting and landscape. Tate Gallery, Millbank, London SW1 (071-821 1313). Mon-Sat, 10am-5.50pm, Sun, 2-5.50pm, until May 17.

HOGARTH AND PRANES: Though they would hardly spring to mind together, Hogarth and Pranes were contemporaries, and both were famous in their own time and later as printmakers. Showing them together is a good excuse to flaunt some of the Courtauld Institute's possessions, notably the 30-odd Hogarth engravings given by Sir Robert Witt in 1944 and the 14 splendid Pranes Prisms bequeathed by Count Antonie Selem in 1978. Courtauld Institute Galleries, Somerset House, London WC2 (071-873-2526). Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm, Sun, 2-6pm, until June 10.

EILEEN GRAY: Irish-born, Gray spent most of her working life in France, where her furniture and interior decoration received an enthusiastic welcome, chiming well with the Deco and Modernist trends of the time. The show also demonstrates her talent for architecture. Design Museum, Butler's Wharf, London SE1 (071-403 6933). Tues-Sun, 11.30am-6.30pm, until July 5.

SALEROOMS

TOMORROW: The International Classic Bike Show at Stafford plays host to a Sotheby's sale at noon. In many cases modern and replica bikes are expected to make at least as much as the early favourites. Sotheby's (0785 46401), during view and sale.

TUESDAY: Phillips have both British paintings and English and continental furniture at 11am. Among the former is a view in Tahiti by William Hodges, who accompanied Captain Cook (up to £60,000) and a Regency marble-topped dolphin-supported centre table is expected to make up to £30,000.

Phillips, 101 New Bond Street, London W1 (071-629 6602).

TUESDAY-THURSDAY: A spring Islamic season begins with works of art, ceramics and Indian miniatures at Christie's on Tuesday, 10.30am. On the same morning at 11am, Sotheby's carpet sale includes European as well as Oriental and Islamic costume and textiles at Christie's South Kensington. Wednesday sees Islamic works of art at Sotheby's 10.30am, notably a 13th-century candlestick (up to £100,000). On Thursday at 11am Sotheby's have Oriental manuscripts and miniatures. At 2.30pm Christie's have carpets, while Sotheby's offer

Evenings Out

MAGGIE GEE, AUTHOR OF "WHERE ARE THE SNOWS"



"I would love to go to the Rembrandt exhibition at the National Gallery. I think all people who do creative things are fascinated and appalled by an artist who is successful and then declines into neglect. I would go and see *The Skeleton at the Feast* — *The Day of the Dead* in Mexico at the Museum of Mankind again. On November 1 and 2 in Mexico the dead are supposed to come back to earth and the living decorate graveyards and give great dances to celebrate. It's a cheerful festival, and the exhibition is brilliantly colourful and macabre. I want to take my five-year-old daughter to see *Hook*. We've just been reading *Peter Pan* and she adores it, and I like Dustin Hoffman who plays *Hook*."

Film: Geoff Brown: Theatre: Jeremy Kingston: Classical Music and Jazz: Brunsell: Rock and Jazz: Stephanie Osborne. Dance: Debra Crane. Exhibitions: John Russell Taylor. Videos: Geoff Brown. Bookings: Kan Knight. Salerooms: Huon Mallatieu.

Indian and South East Asian art Christie's, King Street, London SW1 (071-839 9050) Sotheby's, New Bond Street, London W1 (071-492 8080) Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 (071-733 3888).

TUESDAY-FRIDAY: In Edinburgh Sotheby's have sales silver and Scottish and sporting pictures at the Freemasons' Hall, 99 George Street, Tuesday, 3pm and 6pm. On Wednesday and Thursday Christie's Scotland are based at the Royal College of Physicians in Queen's Street. They have silver on Wednesday, 2pm, carpets and furniture at the same time, and items from the Bailean family collection at 6pm. On Thursday at 6.30pm they offer pictures. There are more paintings at Phillips on Friday, 11am. Sotheby's, 112 George Street, Edinburgh (031-226 7201). Christie's Scotland, 164-6 Bath Street, Glasgow (041

Lawrence after the Lean times

Lynne Truss on the usual mixture of ham and beefcake that mostly makes up the traditional Easter hero sandwich

Easter, it seems, is a time for heroes. It is a time for Tom Thumb, Tarzan, Luke Skywalker, James Bond, Robin Hood, and Lawrence of Arabia. I am not complaining about this. I just think it's weird. You could line up all the mythical and historic figures of the Western world on a parade-ground and say "All those with claims to Easter specials take one step forward!" And then get a big laugh with: "Hey! Jesus of Nazareth! Where do you think you're going?"

Somewhere at the back of the Easterday viewer's mind lurk vague notions of crucifixion and resurrection, but basically what the hell, it's Disney Time. Whereas on the sober Good Friday afternoons of yesteryear we would draw the curtains and sit in the dark (less out of reverence than pragmatism — the light reflected on the screen) and watch theological discussion programmes, we now find that the nearest thing to religious programming is *Sparks' Magic Piano*, if you don't count *Return of the Jedi*.

How do their minds work, these telly people? Well, the *Sparks* story is sort of mystical, I suppose. Er, and it contains a message of hope. Umm, and of course we associate it with Sundays (because we used to hear it on the wireless every week). Plus, it dates from long ago. All the right ingredients for an Easter story, then, without the blood.

What doesn't bear thinking about is the effect of all this on the kiddies. Not because they should be forced to worship, but because if they don't learn to react to some deep level to the Christ story, how will Steven Spielberg and George Lucas make a living? I thought you had to know about the Messiah, if only as a background to all the messianic drive on the big screens.

But one day soon a man will find himself in an American hotel room reading the Gospels (because there is nothing else) and will find the book away, saying "Pah, they got all this from *Superman*."

In any case, perhaps the type of Christ is no longer the model for heroes. Modern heroes must be prodigious and charismatic, they don't have to be morally worthy, and they are strong rather than brave. As for self-sacrifice, forget it. The basic heroic trait is survival, followed closely by a lack of psychological complexity. This new orthodoxy can lead us

REVIEW

followers into confusion. Take last Monday's *Freddie Mercury Tribute* (BBC2), the live concert from Wembley Stadium in the cause of AIDS awareness. At the aren't-we-great finale we had Liza Minnelli, backed up by a chorus-line of writhing smiling rock stars in denim, singing "We are the champions." Well, it made the heart lift, didn't it? That huge sea of bare arms waving from the stadium in the manner of, well, of a Nuremberg rally. And everyone singing Freddie's immortal words, "No time for losers, for we are the champions." No time for losers? What are we all doing at an AIDS awareness concert, then? Is somebody being ironic here?

I shall stop ranting in a minute, but there is one more thing to get off my chest — *Vi, Steven Spielberg's Amazing Stories* (BBC1), served at bedtime on Easter Sunday. Set on board a wartime B-17 (and starring Kevin Costner and Kiefer Sutherland) it was essentially a fashion parade of good-looking Yanks in sheepskin flying-jackets, but it also contained high drama of a peculiar kind.

A gunner called Jonathan was trapped in a sort of glass pimple on the underside of the aircraft, and by some ghastly coincidence the undercarriage was stuck. Things looked bad for Jonathan, because sooner or later the plane would have to land, and it would be landing directly on him.

Cliffhanger, eh? The engines drone. Jonathan's pretty young wife scans the night sky, and a mysterious padre is rustled up to the airbase to send a Thought for the Day to the aircraft's pained and thoughtful crew. What can be done? Jonathan believes fervently that the captain (Costner) will think of something, but alas the captain's mighty bean lets him down on this occasion, so he prepares to land the plane regardless. Oh dear.

Then one of Jonathan's mates (Sutherland) decides it would be charitable to blow out Jonathan's brains before impact (this is true), but despite a couple of sweat-drenched minutes pointing a quivering revolver at the guy's unsuspecting head, finds that he can't really do it, so doesn't. Ho hum. Tension mounts, but no one thinks of anything. Clearly these



Rivals: (from left) Siddiq El Fadil and Ralph Fiennes versus Bernard Lloyd, Arnold Diamond and Robert Arden in *A Dangerous Man*

American airmen do not drink Carling Black Label.

How can the situation be saved? Well, you won't believe this, but Jonathan wishes so hard for the undercarriage to work, that in the end it does! Amazing. It is not a boring old normal undercarriage, though, it is a superimposed cartoon! It is as though the great Walt Disney in the sky has heard Jonathan's pleas (or possibly Spielberg's), and reached down with his big celestial pencil to draw a pair of wheels. Jonathan's will to survive has saved the day, and all the bemused airmen shout "Hurrah! We did it!" I can't think how anybody comes out of this story well, actually, except the designer of the sheepskin coats.

In the midst of all this trash, it was strange to find a film about T.E. Lawrence's backroom discussions at the 1919 Paris peace conference, especially on ITV on a

Saturday night. Was it a mirage. I wondered? Surely ITV doesn't think this will bump up the ratings — Lawrence after Arabia?

I admit I was in two minds about watching it myself, being the only person in the world who had not seen the David Lean picture, and had therefore never fallen under the spell of the blue-eyed desert hero who wrote his will across the sky in stars.

For years, all I knew for certain about Lawrence was the manner in which he rode a camel, because my sister kept demonstrating on the arm of a chair.

Since watching last weekend's *A Dangerous Man*, however, I have done a lot of catching up. I can now understand why David Putnam et al decided to make a film about Lawrence's role in postwar diplomacy — his gathering fame, his

clever adaptable double-act with Prince Feisal, his knack for backing into the limelight — but I still have my doubts about those ratings. In *Lawrence of Arabia* he was blowing up railway lines, going mad, being tortured, and riding a camel with his ankles crossed. In the period covered by *A Dangerous Man* he rode a horse rather beautifully, but was otherwise largely on the receiving end of events in corridors beyond his control. He could not write his will across the salons of the peace conference, despite exploiting his celebrity (and funny headgear) to the limit. Important people kept asking who the hell he was.

Was he still a hero, this strange ascetic little man? Of course he was, but not because he was a survivor according to the Lawrence myth, survival was the last thing he desired. He was a hero in the English mould, and this complicates things on the narcissism front

— all that modesty and vanity jostling for space. Nietzsche said that "he who despises himself nevertheless esteems himself as a self-despiser", which well describes the superbly intelligent way Ralph Fiennes played Lawrence.

My only quibble with *A Dangerous Man* was that it ended with Lawrence dishonourably ejected from the peace conference, and told in rather stern manner to "disappear", rather as though his subsequent career in the lowest ranks of the army and air force were part of a conspiracy theory. Lawrence's would-be obscurity is so much a part of the legend that it would be a shame to have it explained away. The idea of a man exhausting his spirit in an exotic war, suffering scourge and torment, and then turning his celebrity into mystery, is stuff that speaks loud (even if you can't make out the words). It even seems to ring a bell at Easter.

Crime Limited (Tuesday, BBC1, 8.30pm)

The advance publicity is a bit coy about the intentions of this new series, from the *Crimewatch* stable. Will it pander to "ghoulish tastes"? No, says Nick Ross, because the taste for real-life crime and detection stories is perfectly healthy. In the first programme, however, *Crime Limited* heads straight for *Silence of the Lambs* territory, by talking to a professional "offender profiler", who builds a hypothetical profile of the criminal from the internal evidence of the crimes (although how you actively search out suspects who hate their mothers is a bit problematical). Later in the series we are promised an item about crime prevention from the 1930s, including an infallible anti-car thief device: a stuffed albatross that you left on the back seat.

L.T.

A question of whose land is it anyway?

Channel 4 tackles the growing battle between walkers and landowners

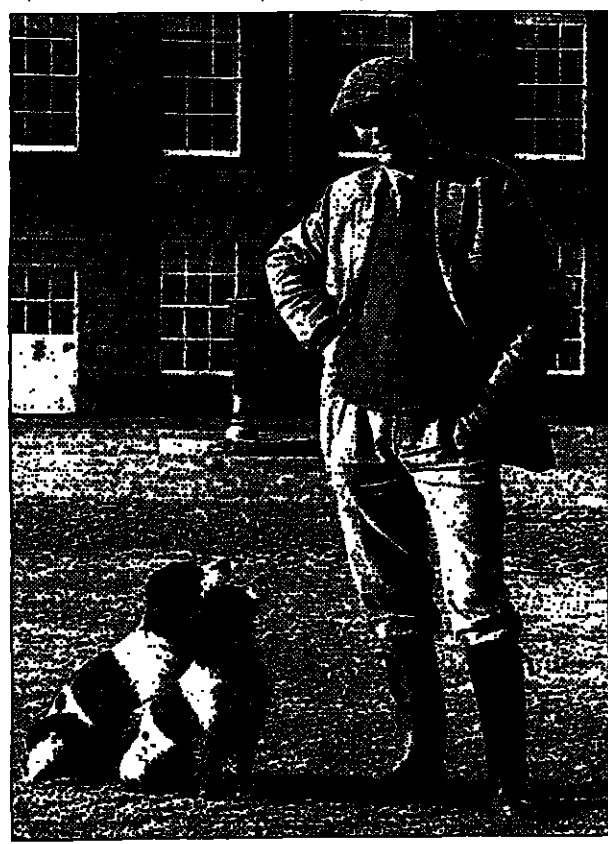
The calm of the afternoon walk is suddenly shattered by a man and a woman blocking the overgrown track, an ancient path joining two villages. "That's as far as you can come," says the man, his voice rising as he strides towards the walkers. "This is not a right of way; it is a private road. I am not going to let you pass."

The walkers try to put their case for continuing, saying the path has been in use for hundreds of years. It serves only to infuriate the couple. "If I was walking through your property or your garden or your house you would tell me to get off no," screams the woman, punctuating her words with a stabbing finger. "This is a disgrace, don't you dare come again. There is no right of way. Do you hear me?"

The above is a condensed version of a remarkable confrontation that features in Channel 4's hard-hitting *Cutting Edge* (Monday, 9pm) on the battle for access between landowners and ramblers. The sequence runs for a barely edited 13 minutes and serves to illustrate one of the great truths of the 20th century: watching people lose their rag makes riveting television.

The film, which has taken a year and a half to put together, began life as "Fragile Earth", intending to focus on the environmental damage inflicted on the land by walkers, mostly in the Lake District, which is often described as having been "loved to death". However, it soon became clear that the reason the Lake District was taking such a battering was because access was so limited elsewhere.

"We thought we'd be looking at lots of ramblers trampling over delicate areas," says Clem Shaw, the producer, who lives in the Lakes. "But it turned out to be much more of



Battling: Sir Anthony Milbank fears damage to the land

a social perspective than an environmental one: more of a political issue than I'd intended. The closer you looked at it, the more you could see it was a time-bomb ticking away."

And, indeed, there is a considerable amount of explosive material in the film. In the literal sense, there are the guns of a shoot on land owned by Sir Anthony Milbank, the 5th baronet, quarry to the Queen and chairman of the Moorland Association, an organisation which the ramblers say appeared out of nowhere to put a block on government moves to legislate for more public access.

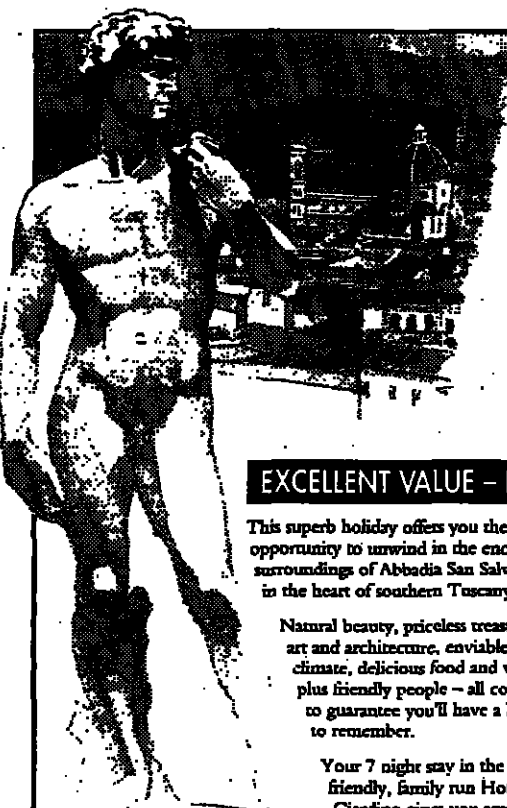
Sir Anthony argues that allowing such access would cause irrevocable damage to flora and fauna, adding that "just because one shoots doesn't necessarily mean you're not interested in the living as well".

Then there's the Ramblers' Association's outspoken pres-

ident, Chris Hall, who is Semtex to the landowners' increasingly short fuse. "We are up against a handful of people whose attitudes to land ownership is positively feudal and selfish," he says. "We're very ready to avoid walking over a precious orchard or trampling over a bird's nest; we know there are places where you must not go. But we're not going to have that kind of blanket exclusion applied to us in the name of a phoney kind of conservation."

Finally, there is Viscount Parker, who owns 3,500 acres in Oxfordshire. Watching as the Ramblers' banner aloft, march over his land as part of the Forbidden Britain Day demonstrations last year, he says: "They don't have rights to land; they don't own the land and there's absolutely no reason why they should put in a takeover bid for the land."

JEMIMA HARRISON



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Seattle takes the grunge



Nirvana: grunge rock's leading exponents. The trio's second album has sold more than six million copies around the world this year

The release last year of just one album — *Nevermind* by Nirvana — may ultimately have a greater impact on the direction of rock than anything else that has happened since the punk revolution of the late Seventies. At a time when the marketing campaigns that steer acts such as Michael Jackson and Dire Straits to multi-platinum glory are planned, executed and paid for like high-tech military operations, the chances of *Nevermind* achieving a similar level of sales were apparently slender. But that, of course, is exactly what it did.

From their beginnings with the Seattle-based indie label, Sub Pop, Nirvana had shown the makings of a promising cult band. Like their grunge rock label-mates — Soundgarden, Mudhoney and Tad — they were an instant success on the college and alternative circuits in America, and quickly found their way on to the ever-alert John Peel's radio show here in Britain. Even so, the initial US pressing of *Nevermind*, the group's second album, was a mere 40,000 copies.

Four months later, to everyone's astonishment, it had sold 2.5 million units in America alone. Worldwide sales have now topped six million. There can be no doubt that this trio has unwittingly demonstrated the vast, but previously unsuspected, appeal of a highly potent strand of American alternative underground rock.

Although grunge shares

Is it heavy metal? Is it thrash? No, it's grunge rock.

David Sinclair reports the *dernier cri* in loud music

many superficial characteristics with heavy metal and bears a close affinity to thrash metal, its precise location on the musical continuum is separate from both. Nirvana's stated influences are radical art-noise pioneers Sonic Youth, pop airheads Abba and The Beatles.

Among their more obvious antecedents are the original hardcore trio Hüsker Dü and Big Black, the pioneering group led by the movement's greatest auteur and shock stormtrooper, Steve Albini. But it is Nirvana who, by harnessing the traditional melodic virtues of pop to blatant extremes of sonic overkill, have finally brought grunge to the masses.

Not only that, their entirely grass-roots driven success has blown such a huge hole in the entrenched wisdom of the industry's corporate arbiters of popular taste that already a sizeable tranche of acts from this long-thriving scene have come spilling through to wider acclaim. In America, record companies are waving their chequebooks at practically any band with suitably left-field credentials capable of producing some sort of melody and a super-cranked guitar noise.

Among the front-runners are Mudhoney, who have recently signed to Hollywood/WEA; Hole, the all-girl

ROCK

group who turned down a personal invitation from Madonna to sign to her new label, in favour of a deal with US mogul David Geffen's DGC operation; and Helmet, a four-piece from New York who have just signed to Interscope, a new Warner-owned label run by the producer Jimmy Iovine.

Soundgarden, who have already enjoyed Top 40 honours in America with their *Badmotorfinger* album will enjoy a further boost to their profile when they tour with Guns N' Roses later this year, and will also feature prominently on the forthcoming "Lollapalooza II" package.

Helmet's deal, believed to be worth at least \$1 million, is exceptional even in the current overheated climate, but then their last album, *Strap It On*, is an astounding piece of work. Available on import on the Minneapolis-based Anaphema Reptile label, *Strap It On* (ARR 89202-1) is a more brazenly raucous and more audacious than anything Nirvana has done, although it is less adept in melodic terms.

On numbers such as "Rude", "Distraction" and "Murder" (grunge bands have an abiding affection for one-word titles) guitarists Peter

Mengede and Page Hamilton gouge out thick, tight wedges of sound, like lumberjacks hacking clumps and splinters from the base of a tree. Most solos begin with howling feedback and degenerate into wounded rhino noises. While the lyrics are little more than a distraction, the power and excitement of the music is total. Andy Wallace, who worked on *Nevermind*, is currently mixing Helmet's new album, which is due for release in June.

L7's album *Bricks Are Heavy* (Slash 828 307-2) is out this week, and the all-girl band from Los Angeles is already surfing the British charts with their single "Pretend We're Dead". Its current placing at No 21 was sufficient to land them a coveted spot on last Thursday's *Top of the Pops*.

With its sing-song chorus, "Pretend We're Dead" is located at the furthest limits of L7's punk-pop sensibility. More typical are the buzzsaw guitar and mauling tor-tion patterns of "Wargasm", the grumbling bass riff and menacing vocal of "Monster", or the droning chords and petulant shriek of "Shitlist".

Several all-girl or girl-led groups operating in the grunge/noise idiom have been

herded into a rather artificial and, some would say, demeaning subdivision known as "foxcore". Jostling for position in the wake of L7 and the wearisome Hole, come such acts as Calamity Jane, Bikini Kill, Mud Women and Babes In Toyland. What unites them is an attitude first explored during punk, which rejects every last vestige of the girl musician as a pouting siren. These women are so tough they make predecessors from Suzi Quatro to Siouxsie Sioux seem like simpering bimbos.

The success of Nirvana and the explosion of interest in the alternative underground scene may prove a mixed blessing. While the excitement and fresh attitude which Screaming Trees, Unsane, Bullets For Puss, Bitch Magnet and others bring to the mainstream is all to the good, the effect of so much record company and media interest may prove deleterious to bands that are still at a formative stage.

The inordinate amount of expectation and hype which inevitably comes into play has put a heavy weight on the shoulders of young and inexperienced groups such as Pavement, Paw and Superchunk, in some cases creating a damaging imbalance between their public profile and ability to come up with the goods. As Nirvana's bassist Chris Novoselic lamented in a recent magazine interview: "The underground gets purged, and bands don't develop; they're getting signed right out of the garage."

Opportunities are missed and a pretender unmasked

OPERA

Don Giovanni
Theatre Royal,
Glasgow

Lucifer's? stuck into the ground.

Collins's "movement" is confined to a scarlet-lit and proscenium-framed village show routine, complete with pub piano, by the peasants of Act 1; some frenetic hand-flapping and finger-licking during its minute finale; and much frenzied wiping of the hands in the very last chorus, as if all the perfumes of Arabia...

So many opportunities are missed. At production frequently stands or falls by its handling of the Act 1 ballroom finale. Apparently unaware of the music's powerful progression in tracking from disintegrating into musical and moral chaos, Cairns and Collins take a big tumble, and mighty is their fall.

Long before this, however — and afterwards, too — there are basic faults in stage craft. The Commendatore, for instance, ambles on during the Don's attack on his daughter, Donna Elvira's first aria is weakened by being sung through a slash in a curtain (there are many curtains, and much noise behind them).

The real missed opportunities, though, are musical. Be-

fore he took up the baton, the singer Robert Dean had clocked up a considerable catalogue of Don Giovanni's of his own. Strange, then, that his direction should be so deaf to the rhythmic and harmonic chemistry of this score, and to the breath and pulse of the singers themselves. Rosemary Joshua's characteristically intelligent and vivacious Zerkina, and Gidon Saks's formidable Leporello were two larger than life performers in search of musical and dramatic direction.

Don Giovanni himself was sung, as was Glenn Winslade's Ottavio, like an old trouper by the experienced and reliable Steven Page. His Donna Elvira and Donna Anna, alas, had neither of these qualities. While Virginia Kent was ill-focused and squally, Linda McLeod as Anna brought the first real thrill of engagement to the production. But she has been unwisely cast: her demands for revenge cruelly try a voice and a stage presence far too distinctive to be thus endangered.

Meurig Davies as Maseno and David Gwynne as the Commendatore discharged their respective duties melodiously and conscientiously, despite having to grapple with a sometimes embarrassingly prosaic new translation by Helen Cooper. That only added to the evening's dead weight.

HILARY FINCH



The Commendatore (David Gwynne, left) is killed by Don Giovanni (Steven Page)

Funkily far-flung flings

ALTHOUGH Ireland's folk tradition has long made its presence felt in the rock marketplace, the impact of Scotland's equally rich folk heritage has been less pronounced. Even Runrig, the current champions of the region, have only broken through to wider success elsewhere by turning themselves into a rootsier version of Big Country.

This is about to change, thanks in large part to the pioneering efforts of Capercaille, a young, Gaelic-speaking band from Oban, a fishing town on the west coast. Already in Scotland they are commanding audiences of between two and three thou-

FOLK/ROCK

Capercaille
Mean Fiddler

sand. In London this week they had to make do with a couple of hundred knowing souls, but that could quickly multiply, given the unique and stirring quality of this performance.

Stretched across the full extent of the small stage, the seven-piece band was armed with an assortment of ancient and modern instruments. Accordion, recorder, fiddle and bodhran were complemented

by electric bass and keyboards. Their playing styles produced an eclectic mixture of fife and funk. Although armed with a conventional kit, drummer James McIntosh played it with what looked like a pair of miniature besom brooms, while Manus Lunny has evolved a style of bouzouki playing which in different circumstances might have earned him a place in James Brown's band.

The focus of attention was singer Karen Matheson, a slight figure, dressed in black, whose diffident manner suggested a lack of confidence. It was nevertheless her calm but committed presence and bewitching voice which pulled the disparate elements of the band's music into focus. Singing in both Gaelic and English she gave pure expression to songs which adapted the music and sounds of a Celtic heritage to a modern aesthetic, a time-machine trick which echoed at moments the way in which the Israeli singer Ofra Haza splices traditional Yemenite rhythms to funky beatbox rhythms.

On material ranging from the slow ballads "Outlaws" (about the poll tax) and "Crime of Passion" (in memory of the massacre at Glencoe) to irresistibly sprightly romps like "Waiting for the Wheel to Turn" and "Coisich A Ruin" they displayed versatility and imagination while keeping a firm grip on their cultural brief. The Brazilian/Gaelic fusion of one of the encores prompted an energetic outbreak of dancing in the crowd. "It's a long drive from Oban," accordionist Donald Shaw said, looking at the ranks of happy faces. "I guess it was just about worth it."

DAVID SINCLAIR

Ambling nostalgia with no bite

THEATRE

White Woman Street
Bush

the gold "will make me shine", a Brooklyn Russian (David Yip) dreaming of ancestral Easterns, and a dim Englishman from Grimsby (George Irving), but their

leaders are two. Good old Mo (Roy Hannon), a guru from Amish country, spends the play affably exuding Christian charity. O'Hara (Jim Norton) is much preoccupied with his native Sligo and with White Woman Street, the town where he once came to lay an Irish whore with "wild green eyes as lost as emeralds in a Texas stream", only to discover in the dawn that she

was a suicidal Indian. It is largely to lay this ghost that he is back in Ohio.

Anyway, he achieves an apotheosis in the arms of Mo, who croons "may your eyes not see me; may they see the hawthorns of home". Well, Barry is writing a play for the Abbey. Maybe that will be a more robust creation.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

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1520 2014

Good pickings along the Bush trail

Is it something in the water at Shepherds Bush? Is the place a covert well? Shepherds Bush is not actually as risible as it might sound. At the height of the fashion for watering places there were schemes for resorts at such suburbs as Upper Norwood and Suburbia. The proposed Beulah Spa at Norwood would have been as grand as Buxton. But why spa? Why did that small town in the Ardennes become an epitome? Was it that a foreign suffix was reckoned to lend an exoticism not conveyed by wells or bath? No doubt. And in the promotion of pleasure enterprises the same practice continues today, as we shall see.

OK, let's admit that it's not the water. And I think that anyone who has visited would agree that there's nothing too special about the air down there at the Bush. So to what combination of circumstances can this suburb's gastronomic eminence be attributed? It is unquestionably eminent. The Brackenbury, Snows, Chinton, Wilsons, I've written about the first two in recent months. I hadn't visited the others for five years.

Why should those who live in a demographically kindred suburb such as, say, Holloway be so much more poorly served than those who live in the Bush? The answer can't be just the BBC, but that's a clue. The Bush may not have the waters, it may not have the air, it may be no one's ideal resort. But it has the advantage of being a mixed-use suburb, which is rare in London. Its restaurants, and its innumerable wine bars, have two clientele: workers and residents, daytime and night-time. Add to that rents way below those of Kensington or Holland Park, easy access from these areas, proximity to the hardly less affluent burghers of Chiswick and Bedford Park and it seems to have been purpose-built for restoration.

Even so, a restaurant needs to announce itself by some means or another. Chinton is self-effacing to the point that the owners had not bothered, when I went there a couple of weeks ago, to replace the main sign which had fallen off the fascia. Add to that a shop window obscured with curtain linings and a door which is locked and you're looking at a place which does not go out of its way to court custom. Hardly surprising, then, that only



Jonathan Meades
explores a promising

suburb that's ripe for restoration

one other table was occupied. So there were four of us there, which meant that it was 20 per cent full. It is a very small outfit. It's furnished with junk-shop and auction-room trappings: jazz-modern printed velvet on the chairs, a Brian Cook-style townscape of Segovia, a lot of pink, a tented ceiling. One suspects that whoever did this had their taste formed by Biba, circa 1974.

The co-owner waits. She is intermittently very valuable — hence the gen that neither she nor her partner who cooks had ever been to Chinton. Perhaps it was a name chosen off a bottle. She disappears for protracted periods behind a screen which masks the kitchen. Jazz plays constantly, though numbers are sometimes interrupted at the house's whim, just as they might be at home. It's all pretty much off the wall, shabbily nonconformist, a world away from the sleek professionalism that is today's norm. I think it's fair to say that the surroundings do not promote the expectation of cooking as fine and inventive as that which is in fact served. Predictably, perhaps, the cooking is as careless of current fashions as the dining-room. But in a different way, it's high-performance stuff tempered by just enough sense to stop it trespassing into the realm of circus trickery.

With the exception of cheese, which although of good quality was all on one note and which was served with a tart tamarillo and some bitter grapes, dinner was impressive. Squid is used as a sort of ravioli with, typically, two fillings — one of an aptly uncheesy pesto, the other a tomato fondant. Foie gras is served with jardons, making it a luxury version of liver and bacon; its sauce is based on Beerenausele, its rosti is burnt.

Main courses are served on plates the circumference of a Mini's

wheel. There is just enough room on the tiny tables for two of them. They need to be this size in order to display the manifold components. Sweetbread is roasted and served with tomatoes slow-roasted in chilli oil, pine nuts, garlic cloves, a layer cake of aubergine and skinned peppers, a hemispherical cabbage leaf which contains potato purée. The hemispherical cabbage leaf on the colliding plate contained bacon and sweated onion bound with something creamy; the main feature was beef with cracked peppercorns (unannounced on the menu).

The only pudding is a copious anthology of items: it is again characteristic of the place that is unaccommodating towards the punter who doesn't want to be dictated to. Still, these puddings are first-rate. They include: rhubarb sorbet, elderflower mousse, almond tart, blood orange sorbet, two sorts of chocolate cake, berries in a "basket". The breads are first-class, so are the trifles and cakes with coffee. The wine list is more in line with the dining-room than with the kitchen.

A couple of hundred yards away, Wilsons is a different sort of establishment: easy-going, endlessly accommodating, more endearingly eccentric. There are tartan tablecloths, a customer in a tartan suit, a proprietor in a tartan tie (but he also wears cowboy boots), a bagpipe on a wall, pipe music. Dundee folk music (which sounds like Joan McCauley). There are bare boards, good paintings, a trompe-l'oeil of a shelf, a frieze of cauliflower, and an attractive stained glass to the outside. The cooking, and the prices, are pitched at a less ambitious level than are Chinton's. There is no attempt here to render every dish a tour de force. It may be simpler but it is no less appealing. The emphasis is on good grub rather than on a form of haute cuisine. It's expert and individual good grub though. There's nothing sloppy or knockabout here. The cooking is precise, clever and confident.

There are affinities with The Greenhouse's school of British cooking. Hot ham is served with pea pudding and a creamed parsley sauce — each item is splendid, and so too is home-made piccalilli, a version which quite



JONATHAN MEADES'S RESTAURANT GUIDE

rehabilitates that recidivistic chutney. Chicken liver purée is served with home-baked bannocks, which are particularly high-grade cakes. The baking is altogether accomplished: chicken is given a buttery shortcrust pie top, stuffed with mushroom duxelles and sauced with port. The red cabbage with it was redundant, so too was a bundle of frizz with baked cod. This was otherwise accompanied by bacon and a clever sauce of garlicky, puréed haricots. Sweets were bread and butter pudding and mango sorbet, the latter superior to the insufficiently lubricated pud. The 40-bin wine list is soundly chosen; the prices of the bottles, as of everything else, are cheap.

Chinton
25 Richmond Way, London W14 (071-602 5968)
Lunch and dinner Tues to Sat. £85 plus
Wilsons
236 Bythe Road, London W14 (071-603 7267)
Lunch Sun to Fri. Dinner Mon to Sat. £45 plus

Frank Warren

Contrary to what I said in my review of the Phoenix Apollo restaurant (April 11), Frank Warren, the well-known boxing promoter, is not a patron and has never been there. I apologise for any embarrassment caused.

FINE WINES

Winteringham Fields
Winteringham, near Southorp.
Humberdale 0724 733096

Overlooking the Humber. A 16th-century house full of Victorian gawwags and furniture. The young staff are sound. The cooking by the Swiss owner-chef is unusual, often elaborate and almost consistently successful. It is weirdly sweet-toothed: thus sweetbreads are accompanied by a fantastical-looking, orange-flavoured pastry and a sweetish mixture of yoghurt, cream and candied peel. Steak is served with gratified snails. Oysters and courgette flowers are deep fried. Impressive cheeses and some good wines, including a number of Swiss bottles. Lunch Tues-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. £75 plus. Set lunch £42 plus. Winteringham Fields also has rooms from £60.

Al San Vincenzo
30 Connaught Street, W2 (071-262 9623)

A self-styled Neapolitan chef whose repertoire is akin to that of the better British chefs, albeit with a slight Italian accent. Not an address for either pasta or polenta. But there is some kinship with the *nuova cucina* chefs of Rome and

FINE PUDDINGS

The Feathers Hotel
Market Street, Wokingham.
0709 512291

Predominantly Georgian hotel which has been restored with imagination in a variety of styles. The young chef, David Lewis, cooks with assurance. Dishes such as duck with honey and caramelised garlic, scallops and turbot with a meaty sauce, ox tail braised with Madeira and bone marrow are all punchily flavoured. The puddings are also very good. Soufflé tritons are somewhere between doughnuts and bighearts and should not be missed. Not should the pistachio cheesecake, wood burgundies £85 plus. Lunch and dinner every day.

Bistro 190
190 Queensgate, London SW7 (071-531 5666)

Enchanting and user-friendly bistro whose generally sound classic dishes are now and again spoiled by over-elaboration. Brandade of salt cod with salt cod fritters, sausages with creamy mash and *bolito misto* are all basically sound if deficient in this or that detail. Garlic terrine, lemon tart and the generously priced wines are outstanding. £50 plus. Lunch and dinner every day.

RS1
13a Coln Street, London SE1 (071-928 4554)

Almost certainly the most extensive selection of Loire wines in Britain — and there can be few places in the Loire valley which match it. The cooking has little affinity with these wines. It is run-of-the-mill Franglais stuff. What should be hearty dishes are spoiled by daintiness. Fish is rather better dealt with. £55-£65. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat

Starling's Castle
Bony Gifford, Oswestry, Shropshire (091 72464)

Remote, individualistic fortified hotel on the Marches. Cheap rooms — from £15. Cheating and professional cooking: chicken with walnuts, artichokes, served with polenta and peppers, duck with sautéed potatoes, trout with chocolate soufflé. £50 plus. Lunch Sunday, dinner every day.

SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

FAX 071-782 7828

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SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

TIME'S UP — If you are a single person who is tired of being single, then this is the time to act. The use of a box number is recommended in these columns. Before replying to an advertisement in these columns, please take all normal precautions. Newspapers Ltd cannot be held responsible for any action or loss resulting from an advertisement carried in these columns.

A companion of a committed professional female, 30, 5'8", 120 lbs, with a childlike attitude to life, from London, very receptive to life's pleasures, and ready to share with a partner. A 40-year-old female, 5'6", 120 lbs, with a childlike attitude to life, from London, very receptive to life's pleasures, and ready to share with a partner. A 40-year-old female, 5'6", 120 lbs, with a childlike attitude to life, from London, very receptive to life's pleasures, and ready to share with a partner.

ALIVE Professional lady, lived abroad, 30%, lover of art and opera, attractive and intelligent, looking for a man to share life with. 35-40, W. London.

A LOVING Voluptuous woman, 23, looking for a man to share life with. 35-40, W. London.

AMERICAN Professional single, 41, business executive, looking for a man to share life with. 35-40, W. London.

AMERICAN Single, 30, 5'8", 120 lbs, with a childlike attitude to life, from London, very receptive to life's pleasures, and ready to share with a partner.

ARE YOU A tall, curvy, 30-year-old, 5'8", 120 lbs, with a childlike attitude to life, from London, very receptive to life's pleasures, and ready to share with a partner.

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COMPANION 30

All in for a spicy celebration

Ever since Claudia Roden mentioned fish couscous during a Jewish Book Week lecture on food and life in the Sephardic community I have had this dish on my mind. She transported her audience from kitchen to kitchen, from Cairo to Marrakesh, Venice to Istanbul, and took us on a culinary journey across the centuries, following the Sephardic Jews after their banishment from Spain, Portugal and Sicily in 1492 to new homelands in Turkey, Italy, Egypt and North Africa, where their cooking developed with local ingredients

and customs grafted on to traditional Iberian ways.

Mrs Roden finally took us to Israel, where the Sephardic Jews are today making an important contribution to that nation's gastronomy. Vibrant flavours and colours are features of their cooking, and my main recipe today is inspired by the fish couscous. But it should not be called that. Mrs Roden is a meticulous field worker. All the recipes in her books are

Frances Bissell, The Times
cook, suggests a cross-cultural weekend with the vibrant flavours of the Mediterranean



authenticated. She does not embellish, nor does she practice "cross-cultural cooking". I, on the other hand, cannot resist picking and choosing from the vast array of ingredients available.

Into my spicy fish stew went dried

persimmons from California and sundried tomatoes from Sicily; lemons preserved in oil from my own store cupboard; pine nuts from Garcia, the Spanish shop in London's Portobello Road; Portuguese olive oil from the Lisboa grocery in nearby Golborne Road; and a hefty grouper, flown in from the Seychelles, which I bought from George, the Mauritian expert fishmonger in the same street. This is

where to go for varra-varra, parrot fish, capitain and coral trout, silver seabard fish, dolphin fish or mahi-mahi, as well as the more familiar fish.

We have come some way from Sephardic food; this is now a much wider celebration of good food. With Passover this weekend as well as the Greek Orthodox Easter, Liberation day in Italy, Freedom day in Portugal, and Iceland celebrating the first day of summer at the same time as we celebrated St George's day, why not? Here is a feast of dishes with Mediterranean overtones that are well suited to our own kitchens.

DIANA LEADBETTER

This light and lemony Greek soup is traditionally made with chicken stock, but can also be made with a fish stock or a well-flavoured vegetable stock. The cooking liquid from chickpeas or other pulses, such as cannellini beans, makes a very good base for vegetable stock. This is a quick and easy soup to make.

Avgolemono soup	
(serves 6)	
2-2½ cups (1.5-1.45) stock	
3tbsp long-grain rice, such as Pama	
2 free-range egg yolks	
2-3tbsp lemon juice	
seasoning	

Put the stock into a saucepan and bring to the boil. Scatter in the rice, lower the heat and simmer until the rice is tender. Beat the egg yolks and lemon juice in a small bowl or cup, and then beat in a ladleful of simmering broth. Remove the soup from the heat and stir in the egg, lemon and broth mixture. Let it heat through without simmering, otherwise the eggs will curdle. Season to taste and serve.

THE next dish, also based on the Greek *spanakopita*, is very good hot, cold or warm, and is suitable for vegetarians and meat-eaters alike. It is also as much at home in a picnic basket as on the dining table. I like to use a mixture of cheese — feta for sharpness, ricotta or cottage cheese for mellowness, and a hard cheese, which melts and holds the filling together.

Spinach pie	
(serves 6)	
2½lb (1kg) spinach	
6oz (170g) butter	
salt, pepper	
freshly grated nutmeg	
3oz (85g) ricotta or cottage cheese	
2oz (60g) feta cheese, crumbled	
2oz (60g) Parmesan, Pecorino, Cheddar or Gruyère, grated	
10 sheets phyllo dough	

Wash and pick over the spinach removing any tough central stalks. Shake dry, and cook in a large covered saucepan with a third of the butter until the spinach has wilted and collapsed. Drain and cool the spinach, and season with salt, pepper and nutmeg. Stir in the cheeses.

Thickly butter a square or round sponge tin, about 1-1½in (2.5-4cm) deep and approximately 8in/20.5cm across. Brush each layer of phyllo dough with melted butter before peeling it off the pile. Line the tin with 5 sheets of buttered dough, and spoon in the spinach mixture. Cut the remaining 5 sheets of dough to fit the top of the pie. Lay 2 sheets on top, and then bring the overlapping lining sheets over the top layer of dough. To finish the pie, lay on the last three sheets of dough, cut to the size of the tin. Bake in a pre-heated oven at 180C/350F, gas mark 4, for

about 45 minutes, raising the heat for the last ten minutes or so to brown the top. Remove from the oven, allow to cool slightly, and remove from the tin by inverting a plate over the pie, turning it out, and putting another plate over the base of the pie, and turning it right way up.

PLEASE do not let my mention of dried persimmons in the fish stew put you off trying the next marvellous recipe. I used them because I had them. Rather than substitute dried apricots or peaches, which have a very pronounced flavour, I would use dried apples or pears, or simply a couple of handfuls of sultanas or seedless raisins. Almonds can be substituted for the pine nuts.

If you cannot get grouper, use monkfish or the thick end of a cod fillet, something with plenty of depth, texture and density.

For the spice mixture, I have not been too specific, since it is a matter of taste. I like to use plenty of cardamom and cumin, but you might prefer to use more cinnamon and cloves. You can make up the mixture from ground spices, or pound your own with a pestle and mortar. Chillis, too, are a matter of personal preference. If you want to serve a special wine with the dish it goes very well with but rose champagne, you may want to use minimal chilli. I find that a mellower flavour is achieved by cooking in the chilli from the beginning, rather than spicing the dish as you eat it with an accompanying dash of harissa, the fiery red chilli paste. That way leads to tingling lips.

Spicy fish stew with couscous
(serves 6)

Spice mixture
Grind and mix together 1tbsp of some, or all, of the following in proportions to suit your palate: cardamom, coriander, cumin, black cumin, cinnamon, cloves

Ingredients
2tbsp olive oil
1 onion, peeled and thinly sliced
1-2 green or red chillis, seeded and sliced
1 aubergine
1 celery stalk, trimmed
½lb (230g) courgettes
4oz (110g) dried fruit (optional)
1tbsp preserved lemon, chopped
up to 1pt (580ml) fish stock
a few mint leaves
a few coriander or basil leaves
1tbsp freshly grated ginger
1-2tbsp sugar
½lb (230g) cooked, drained chickpeas
3oz (85g) pine nuts or flaked almonds
1½-2lb (680-900g) firm fish fillet, cubed

Fry the spice mixture in the olive oil for a few minutes, and then stir in the onion and chilli. Dice the aubergine, thinly slice the celery and thickly slice the courgettes. Add these to the pan (a large-lidded sauce pan or wok is good for this recipe), together with the fruit, lemon and half the stock. Cook for about 20 minutes, and then add the shredded herbs, ginger, sugar, chickpeas and nuts, and cook for a further 10-15 minutes, adding the remaining stock. Put the fish

pieces on top, replace the lid and let the fish just cook through, which will take about 6-8 minutes, depending on the thickness.

Transfer the stew to a heated serving dish, garnish with mint, olives and toasted almonds, if you wish, and serve with steamed couscous.

Another presentation is to spoon the cooked couscous into an oiled ring mould, press it down, then turn it out on to a heated platter and spoon the fish stew into the centre.

HERE are two Sephardic Passover sweets which are easy to make. The first one is based on a recipe from Gloria Kautler Greene's *Jewish Festival Cookbook*, the second from Claudia Roden's *Book of Middle Eastern Food*.

Mustachados
(makes 2-2½ dozen)
1 size 1 free-range egg
6oz (170g) ground walnuts
3tbsp (100g) caster sugar
pinch of cinnamon (optional)
icing sugar

Grease and flour two baking sheets, and pre-heat the oven to 170C/325F, gas mark 3. Crack the egg into a bowl, and loosen it with a fork. Mix in the rest of the ingredients to form a thick paste. With wet hands, shape the mixture into balls, about a 1in/2.5cm in diameter, and place on the baking sheets. Wet the bottom of a glass, and flatten the balls slightly. Bake for 15-20 minutes, until the biscuits begin to brown at the edge.

Remove from the oven, and transfer the biscuits to wire racks with a spatula. The biscuits remain chewy in the centre. Dust with icing sugar.

The other sweet is latkes, a half cake, which can be served hot or cold as a dessert with sauce or syrup, or on its own at bedtime.

Orange and almond cake
5 free-range eggs
1tbsp sugar
¾tbsp ground almonds
¼tbsp maida meal or fine dry white breadcrumbs
1tbsp grated orange rind
1tbsp orange blossom water
butter and flour, for cake tin

Beat the eggs well in a large bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and mix thoroughly. Pour the mixture into a buttered and floured cake tin, and bake in a pre-heated moderate oven, 180C/350F, gas mark 4, for about 45 minutes. Cool in the tin, and then turn out.

Why not serve the spicy fish stew at a Skip Lunch dinner party for friends who have given up their midday meal? Last year, Save the Children raised £5 million to fight famine in Africa by encouraging people to miss at least one lunch and donate the money saved. Skip Lunch Week begins on Monday. Donations can be made at the Woolwich Building Society on the Credit Card Hotline (081-569 8000), or send a cheque, payable to the Save the Children Fund Skip Lunch Appeal, 17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8RD.

KIND FOOD: ALISON JOHNSON

Check that label before you eat tuna

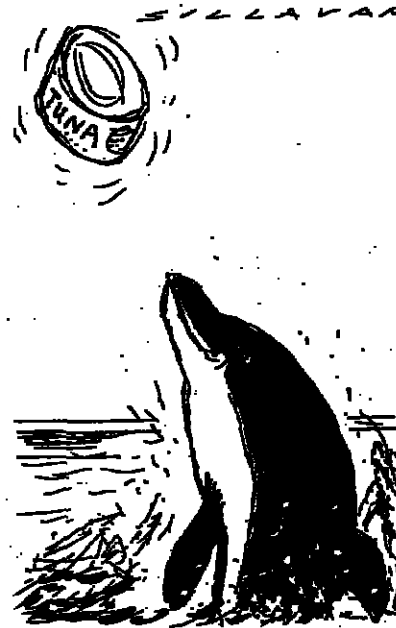
Following Drew Smith's lively *Food File* programmes on Channel 4, every supermarket seems to have become an Italianate cornucopia of virgin olive oil, pasta, pesto and tomato products. I've been delighted to see it, but I found it slightly odd when I returned home to remotest northwest Scotland to discover that the village shop, although it can't always obtain unsliced bread or fresh fruit, now sports no less than five varieties of canned tuna. I don't blame the shop: cans keep whereas fresh produce does not. But there is something excessive about the way we shoppers abandon common sense when the media puts promises of health and slimmings under our noses.

On humane grounds, the tuna in these cans is preferable to the broiler chicken portions in the freezer. Wild caught fish meets a fairly nasty end by suffocation of one form or another, but at least it has lived a free and natural life first. And almost all tuna sold in this country is "dolphin friendly" (check the label). That is to say, it is not caught either in areas where schooling dolphins commonly get entangled in the nets, or by deliberately setting nets where dolphins are seen chasing tuna. That is not to say that dolphins are never accidentally caught, or that many "non-target" creatures, including other fish and seabirds, are not killed as a result of tuna fishing. However, the vast majority of tuna eaten in Britain is skipjack, which, because of its distribution and the purse design of net used to catch it, does not usually incur the dolphin bycatch. It wasn't too difficult to award that blue sticker to skipjack.

The position has been very different in the United States, where albacore and yellowfin are the preferred types of tuna. Thanks to gigantic efforts on the part of environmental and animal welfare groups, tuna caught by methods destructive to dolphins were eventually outlawed there. But the triumph was short-lived: last August, the terms of the ban were ruled illegal by officials of GATT, on the grounds that it produced a barrier to trade. GATT stands for General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, but the generalness of the agreement is somewhat dubious. It represents not so much the producers or consumers of the 108 nations it represents, but foreign trade officials in the grip of the big multinationals. Here only

money talks, not morality. The dolphin and tuna decision is bad enough, but what is worse is that it sets a precedent for overturning any and all environmental or welfare rulings particular to participating nations. The possible consequences are scarcely imaginable — either for animals or for traditional rural societies all over the world who will simply be trodden under by the big corporations in the interests of a free world market.

As long as "dolphin-



friendly" tuna is still with us, use it with respect. I particularly recommend Sainsbury's own brand: it is caught with pole and line, ensuring minimum "bycatch" (polite term for slaughter) of other sea-dwelling creatures. And, yes, it is a "healthy" food — if you eat it in the healthy Mediterranean manner, eked out with olive oil and plenty of vegetables, and a glass of wine on the side. Like so many other foods perceived as healthy, if you stuff it to excess it will do you no good at all.

Serve this quick sauce with any sort of pasta or with couscous. If you prefer very crisp or very soft vegetables, adjust simmering time before adding tuna.

Spicy Tuna Sauce
1tbsp olive oil
2 medium onions
1 green and 1 red pepper
4oz (100g) green beans
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 small, fresh chilli
flat top curried seed
15oz (400g) tin tomatoes (use fresh only if red and ripe)
small tin tuna

Slice all vegetables. Fry in oil over high heat for three minutes. Add seasonings and tomatoes, cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Add tuna, and keep warm for 5 minutes to amalgamate flavours, but without rebolling.

Rhône score a hat-trick

Bowed over by the black, rich peppery, perfumed 1990 wines I have tasted so far, it is clear that the Rhône valley has produced another great vintage. Great Rhône wines are characterised by a dark colour, intense, full-bodied flavours, and seductive layers of blackberry and blackcurrant. Like the 1988 and 1989 vintages, the 1990s have all these.

Given that top French wines are still so very hard to produce, even Francophiles must be wondering how the wine makers of the Rhône have completed their hat-trick. Modern wine-making techniques and improved hygiene must have something to do with it, but the major factor has been the weather. In 1990, a mild, dry winter resulted in an early flowering, and rain in May and August refreshed the vines. In between came an extraordinarily hot, dry summer, followed by fine autumn harvesting conditions. The midsummer drought produced low yields, but the heat boosted the alcoholic concentration and dark, tannic wines resulted. Acidity levels were sufficient to balance the years' tannin, fruit and concentration.

The unusually ripe, soft tannins of 1990, means they mature earlier: most reds will start to be ready somewhere between the five to ten-year-old mark, something to be appreciated in an era when cellars and perfect conditions for ageing are scarce.

Inevitably, comparisons between the last three great vintages of the Rhône are going to be made. The wines

Drought produces another great vintage, Jane MacQuitty writes

of 1989 and 1990 have the edge over the 1988s, and some 1990 wines, such as Cornas, outshine their 1989 equivalents. Hermitage and Côte Rôtie also produced wonderful 1990 vintages. The 1990 southern Rhône wines are also thought to be finer than the

1989s, making this a great year for Châteaufort-du-Pape fans. It has also produced some very fine white wines, particularly Condrieu.

The consensus is that 1990 was an outstanding year for the Rhône. Merchant Robin Yapp describes it as "The most

stunning vintage of our experience". Bibendum and Lay & Wheeler are equally enthusiastic.

Despite this, the wines of the Rhône continue to be underestimated and undervalued, and first-class Rhône still represent extraordinarily good value for money compared with the best of Bordeaux and Burgundy. But with the Americans and others beginning to acquire a taste for them, this cannot last. Bargain hunters take note.

Now is a good time to buy 1990 Rhône. Lack of recognition and demand, and the European recession which brought prices down well below 1989 levels, make them good value for money. A 15 per cent reduction on 1989 is not uncommon. More so, spring frost and harvest rain made 1991 mostly a lacklustre vintage. Once this is apparent, prices are bound to rise.

Before you purchase the 1990 Rhône, however, it is worth knowing the difference in style between those of the north and south, which is far greater than the difference between right- and left-bank Bordeaux. Northern Rhône wines are made principally from the syrah grape, which produces the dark, tannic, perfumed wines of Hermitage, Cornas and Côte Rôtie. Southern Rhône wines are made from a mixture of grape varieties — as many as 15 in the case of Châteaufort-du-Pape — and are warmer and spicier. Either way, the quality can be really good: a first-class Châteaufort-du-Pape is just as memorable as the finest Hermitage.

BEST BUYS

● 1990 Côte Rôtie, Jamet Bibendum, 113 Regent Park Rd, NW1 1J45. Deep, intense, peppery, perfumed syrah fruit.

● 1990 Hermitage Rouge, Le Greal, Marc Sorrel Bibendum £150. Classic smoky, violet scent leading to a rich, ripe and elegant palate.

● 1990 St Joseph Rouge, Clos de l'Arbalestrier Bibendum £55. A deep purple-black colour and delicious flowery-plum-

my palate puts this in the Hermitage league.

● 1990 La Selveoise, Vin de Table, Dumazet Bibendum £50. Elegant viognier grape with crystallised fruit flavours.

● 1990 Condrieu, Côte Fournet, Dumazet Bibendum, £155. First class white.

OTHER great 1990 Rhône producers include: Chave, Chapoutier, Brunier, Jaboulet, Jasmin and Graillet.



The Rhône area has produced a great 1990 vintage

Haute cuisine flies higher

Virgin Atlantic has asked a leading chef to improve its in-flight food

If you want a great meal the worst place to try is 30,000ft up in the air, says Raymond Blanc, the chef-patron of Britain's foremost palace of gastronomy, Le Manoir aux Quat Saisons. Perhaps that is why he has kept quiet about his relationship with Richard Branson's airline, Virgin Atlantic.

M Blanc has been developing dishes for Mr Branson's Upper Class passengers on flights to America and Japan. He is now extremely glad that he turned down an approach to do a similar job for the much larger British Airways.

Having experienced the difficulties in providing high-class cooking on an airline, M Blanc is convinced that for very large airlines they are insuperable.

He is, of course, a perfectionist. At Le Manoir, near Oxford, his cooking is punctiliously precise, decoratively detailed and salivatingly subtle. In an aircraft, he says, it could be useless.

In a pressurised cabin, there is no point in being subtle, he says. The pressure deadens the taste buds. You need more salt, more sweetness, and more spice before you can taste anything at all.

The recipe for the Raymond Blanc entrée that Virgin Atlantic's passengers can take home with them is, therefore, not the same as that used in the airline kitchens. The seasoning has to be toned down for home

consumption. It is the same with wine. Tastings on board have shown that wines considered "over-the-top" at ground level are acceptable at altitude. M Blanc now chooses the Virgin wines, which all have blindingly obvious, big, upfront, fruity flavours — and not many of them are French.

Enabling the customers to taste anything is the least of the problems, M Blanc says. Preparing an *haute cuisine* meal in airline kitchens and serving it to the customer in a recognisable condition makes the mere creation of the recipe seem simple.

"I have had great chefs' airline meals before," M Blanc says, "and I never enjoyed one of them." But he does not blame the chef. "There are so many things that can go wrong, and usually they do — often several times over for the same meal."

I saw what he meant on a test flight to New York for the public launch of his 18-month collaboration with Virgin Atlantic. Virgin had already received accolades from the travel trade press for its transatlantic Upper Class service and food, yet the prawn salad starters arrived almost frozen, and one of the red wines (not M Blanc's choice) was a different (and inferior) vintage to that on the menu card. The old-fashioned crusty bread rolls, on the other hand, were flavoursome and far better than the usual airline pap.



Raymond Blanc: "I have never enjoyed an airline meal"

Unfortunately, the airline had since dispensed with the services of the baker, because his deliveries were late. The fish, pre-cooked in the airline caterers' kitchen and reheated aboard the plane, looked understandably distressed. However, while I would have found it unacceptable at Le Manoir, it tasted good, flavoured with herbs and spices. Its fennel and cardamom sauce was served separately, unlike the pre-applied splotch of thickened goo airlines normally serve. Better still, the vegetables (baby beans and broccoli) really were still green, bright and crunchy. On the return flight, with M Blanc no longer involved, the beans had gone

blue-grey and lost all texture. "It is a constant struggle," says M Blanc of his relationship with the airline caterers. "Frankly, they had chefs who simply had to go. I could not work with such people, set in their ways and unwilling to try anything new."

The new chefs, along with their catering staff and cabin crews, received some of their training at Le Manoir, and ate there. "We had to prove to Virgin's people that all the fuss would be worthwhile," M Blanc says. "I think they have found that it was, but it has not been easy. With a larger, more intractable airline, I could not have done anything."

ROBIN YOUNG

See the light with rustic revival

Canadian folk furniture is inspiring a 1990s look, Nicole Swengley reports

Home-owners seeking a fuss-free style of interior furnishing for the 1990s can draw inspiration from a brightly coloured collection of furniture and textiles made by the Mennonite and Hutterite communities in Canada more than 100 years ago. The collection, which is called "All Things Common" and has not been seen in Britain before, went on show in London this week.

While the influence of the Shakers on our interior furnishing is already well documented by the style magazines, and sales of home-grown country furniture remain buoyant, Michael Regan, the Canadian High Commission's visual arts officer, who has put together this potentially influential exhibition, says: "This is the sort of furniture that people can relate to and live with. Although it is ethnic and rustic, it has its roots in a European tradition. It is less refined than Shaker furniture, being plainer and simpler, but it isn't 'precious' because its basis is utilitarian."

The domestic furnishings on show were made by the Mennonites and Hutterites, religious sects which sought spiritual freedom in the New World when they fled political and cultural intolerance in Europe in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Some settled in Pennsylvania and then moved to Ontario. About 100 years later, a second wave arrived in western Canada from Russia. The Hutterites also settled in western Canada, having journeyed from Russia and Switzerland.

The general perception of these orders tends to be shaped by popular imagery of horse-drawn buggies, plain meeting houses and black clothing. This is probably an accurate picture of their public life but the austerity did not extend to the design and production of their furnishings.

Unlike the Shakers, a high level of colour was introduced by painting furniture in solid primaries and

using dyed threads in their intricately worked decorative textiles. Embroidered towels, samplers, painted handkerchiefs, floor-mats and quilts on show in the exhibition reveal this celebration of colour, along with painted or inlaid chests, desks, beds, sleeping benches, seats, tables, bureaux and keepsake or Bible boxes.

In addition to their wish for simplicity in church structure and worship — and, by extension, their crafts — the Hutterites added the notion of "all things common" by which it was the community, rather than the individual, which held possession of earthly goods.

Furniture in Ontario-Mennonite homes is made of either hard or soft wood. Cherry was popular; black walnut or figured maple less so; pine was an economically attractive alternative, usually painted in solid colours or more elaborately in imitation of hardwood grains.

Pine was the common cabinet-making material for Mennonites in the Prairie provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and the colours used — primarily yellow or red with black trim — bear a striking similarity to the Hutterite furniture. Smaller items, such as domestic utensils, were also highly decorated. Simple tools such as wooden apple-peelers or cabbage-cutters could easily be painted, carved or inscribed by members of the family.

Another decorative tradition was Fraktur, part of a calligraphic tradition practised within the German Mennonite, Amish and Hutterite communities in Europe. In Canada it came to refer to the stylized flowers, animals, hearts, vines and other hand-drawn embellishments in the margins and space between texts on samplers and documents, such as birth and marriage records, and on book plates.

From Ontario came a related art form, paper-cut work. By folding and cutting paper, symmetrical designs were produced, which look



Mennonite water-colour



Back to basics: Michael Regan of the Canadian High Commission with pieces from the exhibition

remarkably like the Fraktur water-colour work.

Hand-spun linen incorporated traditional symbols, usually in red or blue, such as the eight-pointed star, the heart, the tree of life, and occasionally human figures.

By the mid-19th century, quilt-making became popular. Waterloo County Mennonite quilts were more often pieced than appliquéd with their traditional designs exuberantly coloured. Hooked mats and other floor coverings were similarly bold, and included geo-

metric, floral and landscape patterns.

Mr Regan says that original Mennonite and Hutterite furniture and furnishings are widely available in antique shops in Toronto, Calgary and Winnipeg.

Prices in Canada range from about £38 for a chair, £55 for a small table, £138 for a chest of drawers, and storage cupboards from £300. Mr Regan is now looking for an outlet in Britain for original pieces.

If the popularity of reproduction

Shaker furniture for today's interiors is anything to go by, it should not be long before the colourful, yet simple, style of antique Mennonite and Hutterite furnishings enjoys a similar revival here.

The exhibition "All Things Common: Mennonite and Hutterite Home Furnishings" is at Canada House, Trafalgar Square, London SW1, and runs until July 3. Although only a few exhibits will be for sale, Michael Regan can put interested buyers in touch with specialist Canadian dealers. Phone him on 071-629 9492.

Toll rings for Welsh gold

The metal chosen for generations of royal wedding bands has run out

That ultimate in love tokens, the thin band of gold that marks out the married from the single, is under threat in Wales. Supplies of the precious metal, which has been used for royal wedding rings for generations, have run out.

The Britannia Gold company, which marketed gold from the Gwynfynydd mine, near Dolgellau in Snowdonia, sold its last few ounces and closed in 1989, marking what could be the end of the Welsh gold industry.

Three Welsh jewellers licensed to work with the rare yellow metal bought large quantities before Christmas, but such is the demand for wedding rings and other gold pieces that stocks are not expected to last for more than a year.

Boodle and Dunthorne, the jewellers which bought rings from Britannia Gold, are down to a dozen, and the Wedding Centre in Hatton Garden, London, another traditional outlet for Welsh gold, cannot meet demands.

Clive Ranger, the Cardiff-based jeweller and one of three licensees to work in Welsh gold, has enough rings to last only few months, leaving the market open to two small specialist jewellers, Rhianon Evans and Kelvin Jenkins, who work in rural mid-Wales.

And so it is to these two outposts, Corris, in the mountains of Gwynedd, and Tregaron, in the rolling countryside of Dyfed, that couples from all over the world come to have their wedding rings hand-made in Welsh gold.

The resident Welsh are the best

customers, taking from those whose families had their rings made in Wales. But as the gold price has increasingly risen, they are anxious to buy.

Because of the difficulty of extracting Welsh gold, it is two-thirds more than the price of 18-carat wedding metal, about £200. A half-ounce ring costs £47.

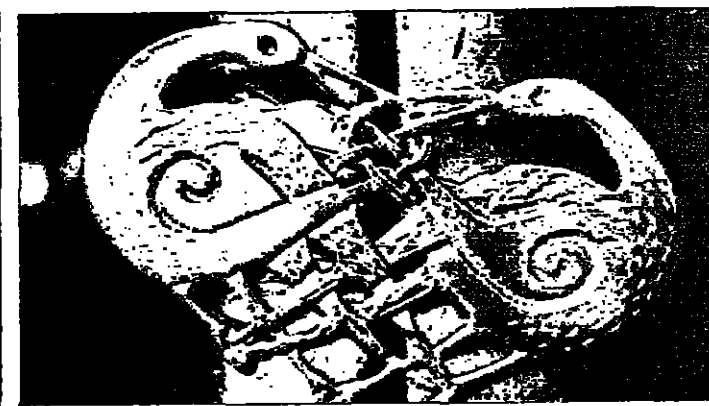
The Clogau St David's mine, near Dolgellau, which was in heyday at the turn of the century, produced the metal that was used to make wedding rings for Queen Mother, the Queen, Prince and Princess of Wales in recent years. Sir Mark Watkin presented the royal family with a kilo of gold mined at Clogau St David's and from which the Queen's York wedding ring was made.

There is still gold in the hills, but the viability of mining for any quantity is remote. Mr Evans and Mr Jenkins invested more than £100,000 in gold mining in the 1970s but they have since sold their shares.

Will last long, Welsh gold is brittle and difficult to work, but other gold, but Mr Evans has beautiful pieces of jewellery in the Celtic tradition, including the popular wedding rings. She has her Tregaron shop in 1977.

In Corris, Mr Jenkins also has a range of wedding rings, but he specialises in engagement rings. Pure Welsh gold is natural, and stamped with the words "Cyntu" (Welsh gold) and a date engraving of a Welsh maiden.

BRENDA PARKS



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Why the green grass of home turns me pale

FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINEY

I have foolishly been looking at the other man's grass and, as you might expect, it is much greener. So I am green, with envy. This confuses me, because I thought that being an organic farmer I was being as Green as I could be. The problem is that the Greener one's farming methods, the less likely one is to find one's meadows as lush as the next man's at this crucial time of year.

The demands of intensive farming do not allow the conventional farmer time to wait for the soil to warm and the clover and humus to work their fertilising magic. Instead, he must pour fertiliser from a bag, so that no sooner has it crossed the mind of the first swallow to head north, than his blades of grass are a foot long. So slender are farming profits these days that every ounce of goodness must be extracted from the land.

But the organic man is, to a

certain extent, compensated for his patience. He knows that cows grazing over-fertilised swards are more likely to suffer mineral deficiencies and even die, because of the changed chemical balance of the grasses. He knows too that the compost he has added to his land will act as a sponge and give up moisture through the long hot summer when less cared for pastures will have been burnt like toast.

Even so, when he looks across the hedge in the spring and sees his neighbour's grass twice the height of his, he suffers a demanding test of his organic faith.

I have been testing myself, in Dorset. I walked part of the coastal path which rambles across the fertile downs, where a combination



of soil, southern warmth and maritime dampness create a perfect country for growing grass. But good grass doesn't happen by accident. Even our prime minister underlines it. When asked on his celebrated visit to the BBC's Desert Island what his luxury would be, Mr Major replied: "The Oval cricket ground." And then, in a sentence which worried me deeply, he declared: "It will be marvellous. The sun will shine and the grass will grow." But what about the rain, the clover, the weeds, the harrowing, the rolling, the grazing?

Other worrying thoughts raced through my head as I ambled through the Dorset meadows on a so-called "break". The blades of



grass, shimmering as they yielded to the sea breezes, licked the top of my boots here at home they hardly touch the laces. I thought about my flock of Dorset sheep and felt I should grab a pocketful of their

native grass and take it home for them, like seaside rock to a child. On the other hand, Dorset seems to have a large number of Suffolk sheep and perhaps I ought to grab a few handfuls of our grass and

post it to them. I am sure that even sheep appreciate home cooking. But I am not motivated by envy when I spy my neighbour's grass. The point is that not until the grass is growing vigorously will it be time to turn out the stock that have been wintering in the farmyard.

For them it will be a blessed release, for no matter how comfortable you try to make a yard, farm animals naturally belong in wide open spaces. And, more to the point, this farmer gets fed up with the daily routine of carting feed.

It has been going on now since the end of October and I am at the point where the sight of another mangelwurzel will make me sick. I planted them, hoed them, lifted them, carted them, and now six months later I am still picking them up one by one, dropping them in a bucket and placing them before cattle. I am at the point where I can almost recognise indi-

vidual ones. Even worse, next week I shall be sowing next winter's crop. Torture by mangelwurzel.

But even when the carting stops and the yard gates are opened wide on to the meadows with the stock, be any happier? If the sheep are anything to judge by, not necessarily. After three months of hustle and barge at the trough and living closer to their fellow sheep than naturally inclined, they still think that something is greener beyond the fence.

A couple of weeks ago, I turned them out on to a pasture breeding with grasses of countless variety and specially planted herbs. But they hardly bent their heads to taste it. They stood at the gate pleading to come home.

If they could take one luxury, with them to the desert meadows, they explained, it would be a farmyard and a man with a bucket. I shall decline the invitation.

Belles of the ball

More women than ever are donning their football boots, Lynne Greenwood reports

On Boxing Day 1920 at Goodison Park, Liverpool, Dick Kerr's Ladies of Preston, a football team of munitions workers, played a match against St Helen's Ladies to raise money for the Discharged Soldiers' and Sailors' Association. The crowd was 52,000, and the match raised £3,055.

This afternoon at Prenton Park, Birkenhead, the Doncaster Belles and Red Star Southampton will compete in the 32nd Women's Football Association Cup Final, the season's main prize. Television cameras will be there to record the highlights, and the game's organisers are hoping to double last year's crowd of 4,000.

A lot has happened between the two events. In 1921, a year after the Boxing Day success, the FA banned women's football, claiming that it was not a suitable game for them, and doubting that the considerable sums of money raised for charity had all found their way to the rightful organisations.

It was not until 1969 that women's soccer became official again, with the formation of the Women's Football Association. The association was launched with 44 clubs. Today there are 410 in England and Wales, compared with 250 two years ago.

This afternoon's final, being played for the second time at the Second Division club Tranmere Rovers' ground, matches the Premier League champions Doncaster Belles, four times Cup winners, against Red Star Southampton, runners-up in the league but making their first appearance in the cup final. "Now that we've got television, it has become a more important occasion," says Linda Whitehead, a lifelong Blackburn Rovers fan who became the WFA's first secretary 11 years ago.

"Television has helped to bring about increased awareness of the sport, and a great increase in membership." Last year women's football attracted average viewing figures of two million for Channel 4's coverage of the sport.

"More people watched us than Paul Gascoigne's soccer school,"



Playing to win: Wimbledon players give their team encouragement

Miss Whitehead says, with a glint in her eye. Guest of honour at the final, who will be introduced to the teams before the game in the traditional manner, is Tom Pendry, the MP and former chairman of the Parliamentary All-Party Football Committee, who recently invited Miss Whitehead to address the group at the Commons.

"The women's game is one of football's great success stories — and indeed growth areas — of recent years," he says. "But I am confident that the success so far is merely the tip of the iceberg. The women's game has a potentially exciting future and it is up to all of us to develop that potential."

The England and Doncaster Belles captain, Gillian Coulard, capped by her country 63 times, has been part of that success. She started playing football at the age of 13 and at 28 is still enjoying the game, when not working as an assembly line supervisor.

"I think I'm at my peak and as long as I'm enjoying playing, I'll carry on," Miss Coulard says. "We are a good team — we've got players who come to us from Hull, Liverpool, Nottingham and Leeds — but

we are like a happy family. We are thrilled to have won the first Premier Division championship; now we are going for the double."

Red Star Southampton will have the oldest and the youngest players. Goalkeeper Sue Buckett is 47 and Sarah Stanbury, who scored the first goal in their 2-0 semi-final defeat of Wimbledon, is 18.

Today's crowd will include male and female fans of all ages. "A lot of young men used to come along to have a laugh," Miss Whitehead says. After ten minutes they were enjoying the action. "The women's game relies on skill and commitment. It's good to watch and it's entertaining."

In the semi-finals, both played at Vauxhall Conference team Yeovil Town's new ground, there was plenty of skill as well as goals. Doncaster Belles romped home to a 10-1 victory over Maidstone Tigrises. Red Star, in the hands of player-manager Pat Chapman, who once scored six goals in a cup final, were surprise winners over Wimbledon, who receive a lot of support from the men's club.

Thirty Football League clubs have women's teams. Millwall showed the way with its anti-sect scheme, sponsored by Lewisham Council, to adopt its local women's team, the Lionesses. Millwall allowed the women access to its ground, training facilities, kit and mini-bus.

Other clubs followed. First Division Arsenal went a step further by allowing girls to join the club from school, on the same coaching programme as the boys, to qualify as football coaches. As more women receive the FA's preliminary coaching award they are becoming involved with the management of women's teams. About 80 of the 410 women's clubs now have a female manager.

This season saw the introduction of a National League of 24 teams, divided equally into a Premier Division and Division One, North and South. Next season there will be ten teams per division.

The biggest growth area is among nine-16 year-olds, encouraged by changing attitudes in schools. Mixed games are allowed in primary schools but not in older age groups, a decision the Women's FA backs. Instead they want secondary school girls to be given the chance to play women's soccer.

"If the game was mixed at that age, it would be detrimental to the development of the girls' game," Miss Whitehead says. "The men's game is faster; we rely on skill."

The greatest restriction on further growth is lack of sponsorship. Although some clubs manage to negotiate local sponsorship the game needs a big injection of cash.

"Two years ago the WFA was running 250 clubs with three members of staff," Miss Whitehead says. "The same three are now running 410 clubs and three official leagues. When you think of the millions spent in the men's game, it sometimes leaves me frustrated and disheartened."

● The WFA, Hanging Ditch, Corn Exchange, Manchester M4 3ES (061-832 5911). Today's kick-off at Prenton Park, Birkenhead, is at 3.30pm. Highlights from the match will be shown tomorrow on Channel 4 at 5.30pm.



Determined: Red Star Southampton's Sarah Stanbury, dark shirt, goes hard for the ball at Yeovil

Feather report

Tuning the reeds

I have been spending a lot of time lately walking alongside, and even through, the great reedbeds of Suffolk. A thought occurred to me. What would have been the reaction 50 years ago, 100 years ago, 200 years ago, to the words I now write: reedbeds are precious, things to be cherished, things on which plenty of money and man-hours are rightly spent?

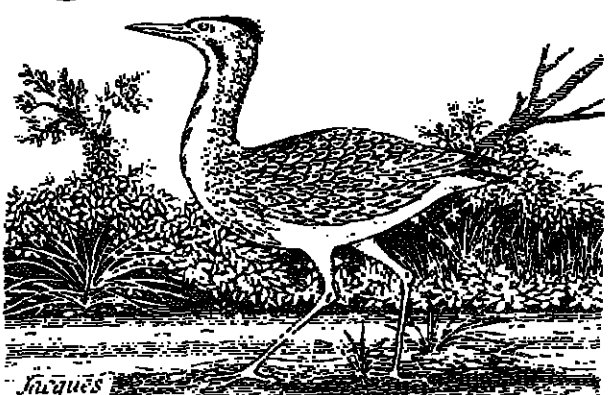
Reedbeds were once regarded as mere deserts; they were waste land, and there were countless acres of the stuff.

Now the reedbeds have mostly gone: drained, dried, ploughed. A walk in reedbeds takes us back to a wilder time, in a wilder time. The seas of vast, uncoloured plants stir the wilder bits of our hearts. And we have an increasing need of wildness.

The cherishing of reedbeds is a recent phenomenon, but it becomes more urgent every year. The main reason is the bittern: only 20 males were recorded in this country last year. The bird has already been extinct here once, because it was shot. It recolonised this century, but now it is threatened again.

There is no more bittern shooting: modern methods are more drastic. Its habitat has been destroyed, bar a few pockets. One of these pockets is Minsmere bird reserve in Suffolk. I went along to see how they were cherishing the reedbeds there. "I've smashed 'em all to bits. Not much left of them now," said Ian Robinson, the warden in charge of habitats at Minsmere.

Conservation is a paradoxical business, but paradoxes come easily to Mr Robinson. Over the winter he began a project for the regeneration of



the ageing Minsmere reedbeds. The talk about gungtho destruction is partly a running joke of his, partly a recognition of the contradictory requirements of conservation.

Bitterns, it has been discovered, like young, wet reedbeds. Reedbeds are not permanent things. As reedbeds age, they dry out, depositing humus as they grow and die, paving the way for scrub and trees to march in. Today, there is nowhere for new reedbeds to form: the old ones must be managed intensively if they are stay as reedbeds.

The problem is that as reedbeds age they become less useful for bitterns. Hence the need for the destructive Mr Robinson, who has embarked on a seven-year programme of regeneration: planning to cut four or five areas every year and reworking a total of 150 acres.

The work involved is immense. The cutting of the reeds with a strimmer is the easy bit. The killer is the raking-out: all done by hand, of course.

The job must be done with thought: the aim is not clear-

ance but the improvement of habitat for birds. Mr Robinson builds in reedy barriers behind which birds can feed securely and happily. Finally, the water levels can be raised through a system of sluices.

It is a long-term business, all of this. The bitterns are at a point of crisis now. Even at Minsmere, long a favoured haunt, they are declining. There is a degree of pleasant smugness in seeing a rare bird, and at Minsmere I had glorious, feather-counting views of bittern. It was a wonderful sight, but there was more melancholy than gladness for me this time.

The antidote to despair is action, and it is grand to know that there is still hope for the last wet, watery deserts of England, and for the mysterious skulking birds that have their being there. Here's to you, Mr Robinson.

SIMON BARNES

● What's about: Bitterns — with spring in full spate, the first house martins are arriving. Twichers — blue-throat singing. Trent Meadows, Derbyshire: alpine swift overflying Margate, Kent. Details from Birdline. 0898 700222

Events

- Gatwick horse trials: Five hundred horses compete in dressage and cross-country events, divided into Novices on Saturday and Open on Sunday. South of England Showground, Ardingly, West Sussex (0444 692700). Today and tomorrow, 9am-5.30pm. £7 per car.
- Beamish bicycle rally: Gathering of pre-1955 bicycles with costumed riders who ride an eight-and-a-half-mile course at 1pm. Open Air Museum, Beamish (0207 231811). Tomorrow, 10am. £6, child/£4.
- Marygate riders: Ancient custom in which 100 men and women ride on horseback around the town's 15-mile boundary. Town Hall, Marygate, Warwick-upon-Avon (02475 330733). Fri, 10.30am. Free.
- Walsend orienteering: Six colour-coded courses, plus an adventure course for toddlers. Rising Sun Countryside Centre, Whitley Road, Walsend, Tyne and Wear (091-266 3524). Tomorrow, 10am-noon. £2, child, £1.
- Nottinghamshire county show: Includes cattle, sheep, goats and horses, plus vintage tractor procession. Newark & Notts showground, Withorpe, near Newark, Notts (0636-702627). May 1-2. 8am-6pm. May 1: £5.10, child, £2.13, family. £12.50; May 2: £4.25, child, £1.28, family, £12.50.
- Garden to visit: Kent: Goodnestone Park has 18th-century parkland, terrace, walled and woodland gardens. Near Wingham, Canterbury. £1.50, child, 20p. Plant sale. Tomorrow for plant sale, 2-5pm, also Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm, until Oct.

GRADUATE TO PERFECTION

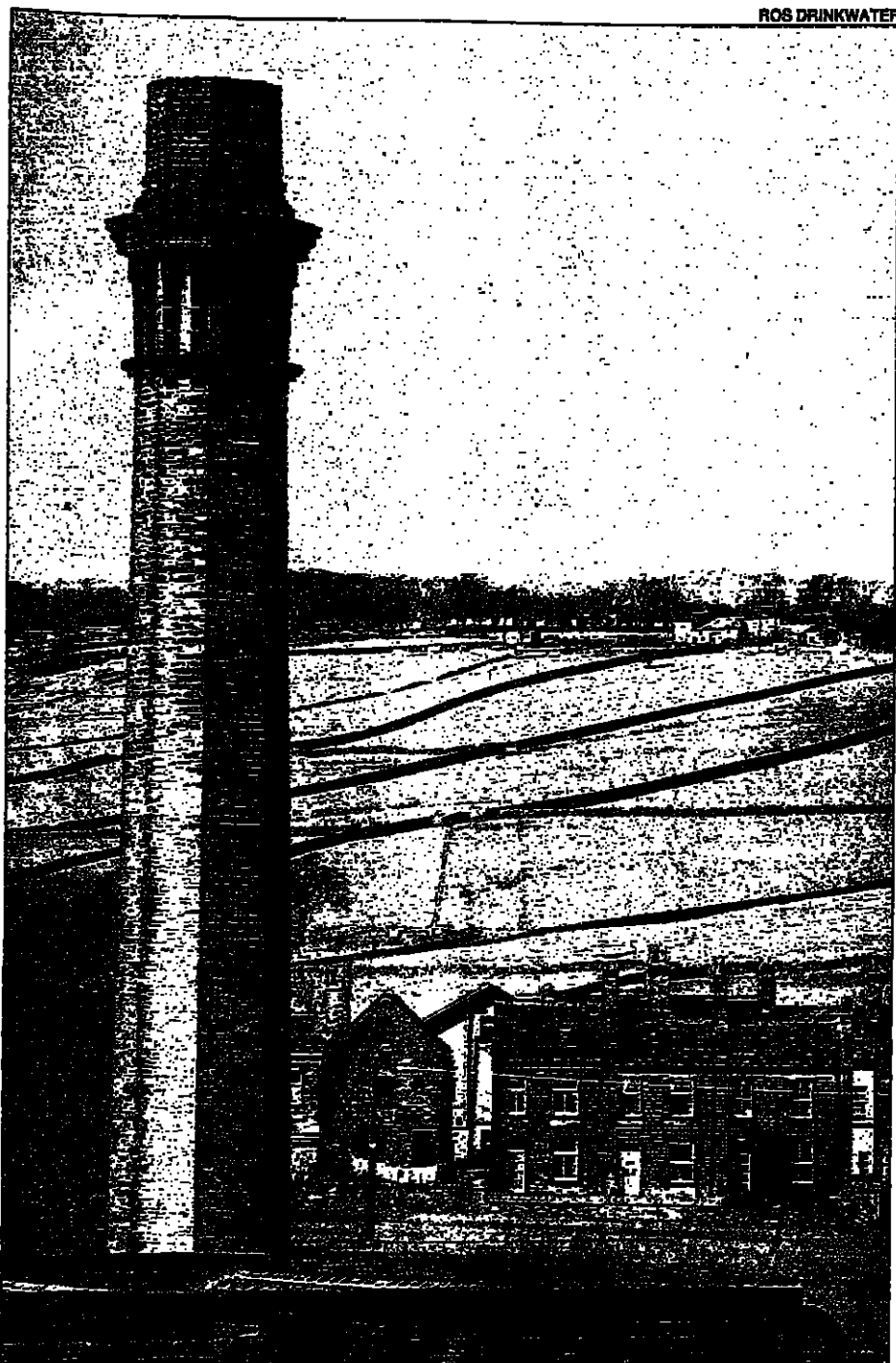
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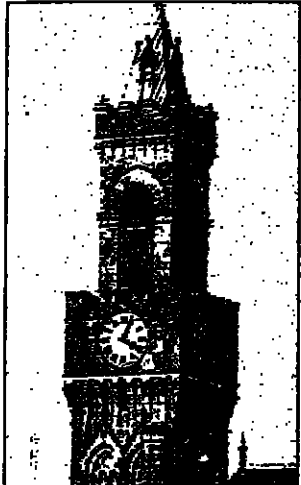
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Away from it all: beyond the old mill chimneys, the rolling countryside waits invitingly



Time change: a new theatre group in "Little Germany", and the old city hall tower



BEST OF BRITAIN

BRADFORD

The prosperous wool era has passed, but Alan Hamilton finds a wealth of museums and culture — mostly for free

John Logie Baird, inventor of Baird's patent self-warming socks, once decided to invent the manufacture of artificial diamonds by plugging an entire power station into a bucket of concrete and a carbon rod. The bucket blew up. Baird lost his job, and a large area of the Clyde valley was plunged into a prolonged power cut. The socks didn't do too well either.

Undeterred, the genius behind the Baird Undersock, whose secret lay in a sprinkling of borax in the sole, turned his mind to the device which eventually gave us Andy Pandy, the potter's wheel, *Take Your Pick* and *Blind Date*. If he is still watching on his celestial Sony, he ought to be mightily relieved that the charge of inventing television is now shared with Philo T. Farnsworth, Vladimir Zworykin, Karl Braun, Boris Rosing and an unnamed group of boffins at EMI, to name but several.

These improbable facts are to be gleaned in an unlikely place. Bradford is home to the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television, an outstation of the Science Museum which has established itself as just about the most visited museum in the country outside London. From Fox Talbot's first wooden camera to the technology of satellites and Sky Movies, the museum traces the history of the recorded image, explaining by means of all manner of hands-on toys, including real television cameras, which children of all ages are encouraged to play with.

In the gallery of news photography there is a mock-up of a newspaper picture desk, at which children are encouraged to select pictures for publication while babbling inanely down



Tribute to a famous son: J.B. Priestley in bronze

telephones. It was, to an insider, exceedingly realistic.

Some of the exhibits, notably the inner workings of a video-recorder, will be understood only by those under 12. Those who remember watching the coronation on a 9in screen through a paraffin-filled magnifying lens feel more at home with the old television clips; but don't Cliff Michelmore and Valerie Singleton look young? And doesn't Dimbleby's commentary on Churchill's state funeral still make the back of your neck prick?

Inside a reconstructed newsreel theatre, old images come back to life with the crowing Pathecock and that desperately frantic voice-over: "Down the bright, straight road to a new order in Europe." Here is our Neville stepping off the plane: "This morning I had another talk with Herr Hitler, and here is the piece of paper..." And here is Len Hutton, a local lad from neighbouring Pudsey, West Yorkshire, arriving home to a civic dinner in celebration

of those immortal 364 runs at the Oval.

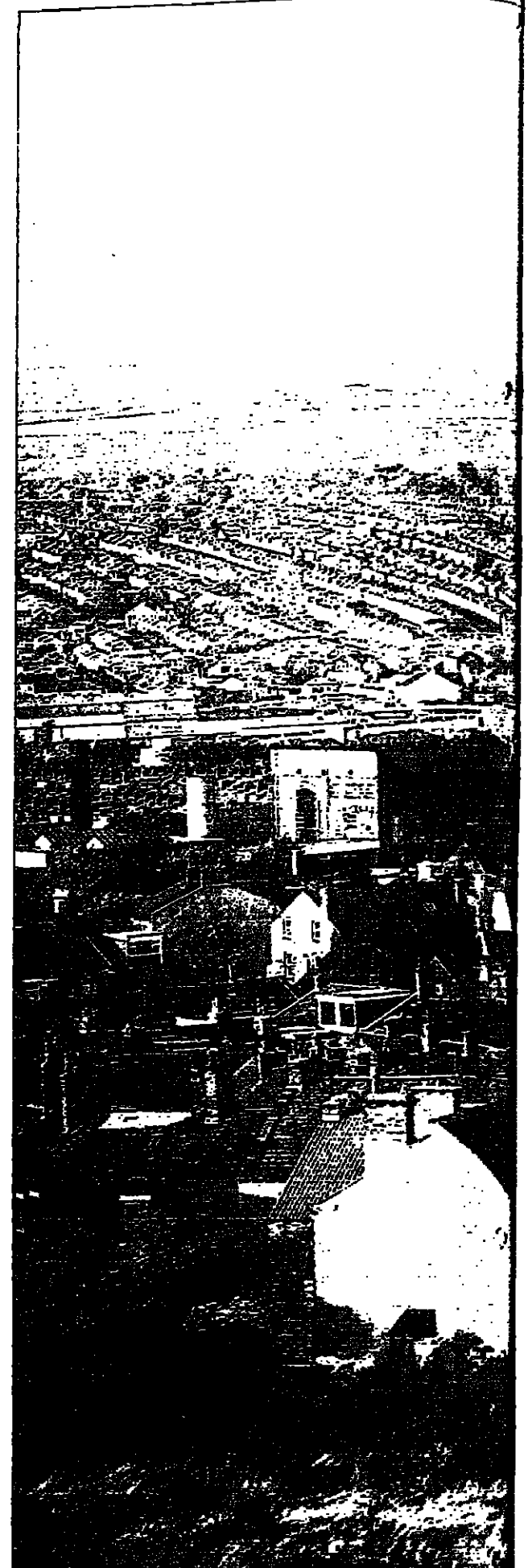
The museum inhabits a hideous 1960s monstrosity, built as a theatre but never so employed. Now the auditorium has found new use, housing the Imax cinema system, the only one in Britain, that projects films with remarkable clarity and definition on to the largest screen in the country, as high as a five-storey building and 60ft wide. Some of its specially made 45-minute films are ravishing to the eye, including a gem on Antarctica in which the penguins are 50ft tall, and a NASA view of Earth from the space shuttle, in which the burning of the Amazon rain forest is visible from 350 miles up.

Elderly rockers, and younger ones who are rediscovering the joys of 1960s music and who enjoy having their brains turned to pulp by shattering quadraphonic sound, simply must book now for a special production showing on selected days until July: 105 mind-blowing minutes of the Rolling Stones on their Steel Wheels/Urban Jungle concert tour.

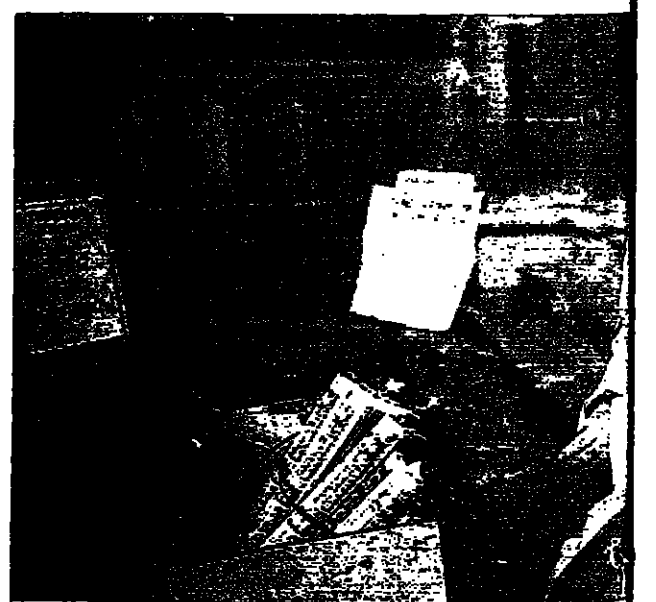
In a less sophisticated photographic age, someone took a picture of the members of the Bradford wool exchange, gathered on its trading floor in 1904 for their annual group portrait, a powerful and lasting image. There they stand, bowler-hatted, grim-visaged, whiskered and watch-chained, 200 and more of them, men through whose hands passed at some stage of its manufacture and marketing five-sixths of all the woollen cloth made in Britain.

Monuments to that wealthy and confident age abound. Bradford city hall, erected in 1873 by the Leeds architects Lockwood and Mawson, is a mighty 13th-century Gothic assembly surmounted by a Florentine campanile which, given the city's huge immigrant population, looks as if it might double at any time as a minaret from which the muezzin would call Bradford's faithful to prayer. The wool exchange, also by Lockwood and Mawson, is a fine building fallen on hard times. Its trading floor is under the watchful sculpted gaze of Richard Cobden's free-trade eye, now deserted; they trade wool by fax nowadays. Up on the hammer beams of its high Venetian roof are the carvings of kings and princes of the earth; they might have considered immortalising the odd merino ram instead, given its essential contribution to the city's prosperity.

Never were the wool barons more pompous and grandiose than in death. In Undercliffe Road, on a hillside on the city's edge, is a remarkable necropolis in which the tombs of Bradford's rich and influential clamour to outshine each other in outrageous Gothic ornament. For the Anderson dynasty, a scaled-down replica of Edinburgh's Scott monument; for the Illingworths, an Egyptian mausoleum; for the Holdens, a Graeco-Roman temple. Happily, after years of neglect, Undercliffe cemetery is now in



Sunlight on satanic mills: few mill chimneys belch out their



Sales pitch: a news vendor on the steps of the once mighty

the hands of owners who care for it, and is in the throes of being tidied up and restored. But the true monuments to the wool barons were the mills they built. Two leviathans survive, although the din of clack-ing looms is somewhat stilled. Lister's Manningham mills is a giant of a building, and its 250ft Italianate chimney is the tallest thing in Bradford. Lister's looms still pour out velvet: take

WHERE TO WALK



Walker's country: the sweeping view from Penistone hill (1,030ft), and the starting point in Haworth for tourists taking the Brontë trail

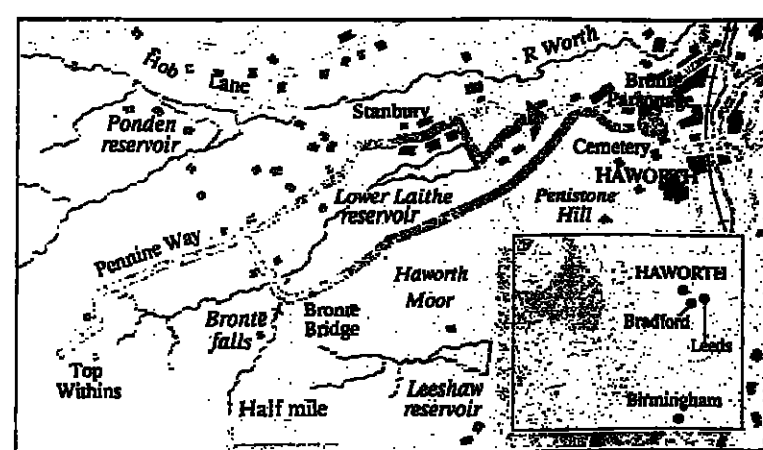


The saving grace of Brudersdorf, J.B. Priestley said — and we can safely assume he had Bradford and Huddersfield in mind — was that for the price of a tuppenny tram ride and a half-hour walk, a man could be among the lakes and curlews, feeling the old rocks warming in the sun and seeing the harebells tremble in the shade.

Bradford's nearest moor is Baildon, an easy walk from the village of Saltaire. What follows is a more adventurous moorland expedition, starting eight miles from the city centre at Haworth but leaving behind the maddening crowd of camera-toting Japanese tourists, who even in March through the Brontë trail.

From the city centre drive along the B6144 to Haworth, or take the frequent bus service from Bradford Interchange, behind the Norfolk Gardens hotel. Head for the car-park opposite the Brontë Parsonage at the top of Haworth's narrow, cobbled main street. Walk to the parsonage, and quickly past it, on a walled footpath signposted to Haworth Moor. The path soon emerges on West Lane, near a road junction. Take the left fork and then follow the high road; you are at once rewarded with a splendid moorland panorama, and the dam of Lower Laithe reservoir beneath.

On the left, opposite a white



farmhouse, a steep path offers a brief diversion of interest for the energetic walker who can climb to the top of Penistone hill (1,030ft), partly across rough moorland. Otherwise, continue on the road for half a mile until it meets the Oxenhope-Stanbury road.

Go straight across and pick up the well-defined track signposted to Brontë falls, which drops down to the valley floor at Sladen Beck. The path remains obvious, but becomes rough in parts and can be wet and boggy after rain.

About a mile from the road, you reach Brontë bridge; a short detour to the left brings you to Brontë falls,

best seen after heavy rain. Cross the bridge and climb steeply up the other side of the valley, bearing left at a signpost to Withins.

Follow the defined track, with the ruined farmhouse of Virginia above and to the right. Keep to the path along the right-hand side of the beck. Cross a tributary stream and climb the steep bank opposite; near a deserted ruin you meet the walkers' M1, the Pennine Way.

Turn left along the Pennine Way, and follow it for a mile or so, until you reach the summit at Top Withins (1,388ft). The deserted farmhouse, lonely, bleak and brooding, is claimed by some to be the model for

Wuthering Heights, and a plaque on the wall repeats the assertion. The site must have been a poor place in which to scratch a living, however, but the moorland panorama is magnificent.

To return, retrace your steps and continue on the Pennine Way for about two miles, gradually dropping downhill until you are opposite the end of Ponder reservoir, away to the left. Where the way makes a sharp left turn, continue straight ahead on a path which brings you out on to a road (Hob Lane) and the village of Stanbury, where two public houses, the Friendly Inn and the Wuthering Heights, offer the visitor welcome refuelling.

Go through the village and turn sharp right on the road which crosses Lower Laithe dam. Across the dam, turn sharp left on to a path which brings you back to West Lane by Haworth cemetery. Retrace your steps to return to the parsonage, and an ample choice of further fuel in Haworth village.

● The walk is about 6½ miles, strenuous in parts but no difficulties. Allow yourself 3½ hours. All paths are well defined, but proper footwear and waterproofs are essential, whatever the state of weather. Moorland climate can be fickle, and disorientation all too easy in mist. The OS Outdoor Leisure map 21 (South Pennines) is highly recommended. Haworth Parsonage is at SE029372.



NICK MALAND

Ask a random group of people what they consider to be the most important difference between holiday in Britain and France, and 10 will say the food. The seriousness of French cooking, the care for the quality of the ingredients (all that scrupulous hand-picking of fruit and vegetables in the markets), the dedication of the cooks, the staggering diversity of regional cuisines... You don't have to be a gourmet to recognise that in matters gastronomic, the French are in a class of their own.

I was awestruck by the meal I ate when I first visited France in the forces in 1945, and I still feel a surge of excitement stirring down to the first meal of French holiday. Even amateur restaurants and fast-food stores can teach us a lot. But the wonderful taste of French cooking is well known. Many British would be awed by the awful taste of the French often show in their furnishings and décor. It is not just the case of wallpaper, the garish carpet

ROBERT SCRUTON - IMPACT PHOTOS



Thick fog, Bradford, the one-time Worstedopolis, still weaves high-quality cloth but its emphasis is on more diverse industry, and a surprising breadth of culture

★ WHERE TO EAT ★



Nonconformist eating: the Bombay Brasserie is housed in an old Baptist chapel

THE joy of eating in Bradford is the enormous number of Asian restaurants, most kept up to a high standard of cooking and authenticity by the city's 70,000 Asian residents.

● Visitors usually start at the Bombay Brasserie in Simco Street (0274 370815), housed in an old Baptist chapel whose every shred of nonconformism has been stripped out to make way for a conformist oriental ambience. Specialities include *mughul-e-azam*, three different curries in one dish, and *thalia sagarana*, marinated chicken stuffed with mince. About £30 for two.

● The Nawaab, at 32 Manor Row (0274 720371), offers an interesting attempt to marry the culinary cultures of Yorkshire and the Orient: tandoori haddock, newly refurbished menu, and offering an extensive high-quality menu, the restaurant's price for a meal for two is about £30.

● Many Asians who live in the Bradford area eat at the myriad "finger-on" corner curry shops, most of which are excellent, authentic and exceedingly cheap. The Karachi, at 15 Neal Street (0274 732015), has dishes from Pakistan and the Indian Punjab, from £2-45.

● The Kashmiri, at 27 Morley Street (0274 726833), was one of Bradford's original Asian restaurants, opening 35 years ago. The Kashmiri-secent menu offers main dishes at mostly under £3.

● If the digestive tract craves relief from spices, head for Restaurant Nineteen, at North Park Road, Heaton (0274 492558), a classy establishment in a leafy suburb. A set four-course dinner for £39 may include roast quail with sautéed potatoes, wild mushrooms and Madeira sauce, and loin of spring lamb. Should such a feast render you immobile, there are four letting rooms.

★ WHERE TO STAY ★

Almost in Halifax but still little more than five miles from Bradford city centre, Holdsworth House, is the area's premier country house hotel, a 17th-century Grade II-listed building with characteristic Pennine mullioned windows, oak beams and a wealth of panelling. It has 40 rooms, from singles to suites, with the option of sleeping in four-posters or half-testers.

Run for the past 20 years by the Pearson family, the hotel has good facilities for the disabled, and its restaurant enjoys a growing reputation. Dinner from £27, single rooms from £74. Weekend breaks at discount prices are available. (Holdsworth House, Holmfild, Halifax, West Yorkshire, 0422 240024.)

Pool Court, north of the city near Leeds Bradford airport, is more a high-class restaurant with rooms. Expensive but indulgent, ideal if someone else is paying. The wine list is pricey, the set dinner menu better value. (Pool Court, Pool Bank, Pool-in-Wharfedale, Otley, West Yorkshire, 0532 842288.)

Bradford city centre hotels are mainly standard chain products, more adequate than exciting. The Norfolk Gardens, owned by Stakis, Glasgow's answer to Charles Forte, is conveniently central directly opposite the City Hall, modern and functional. Concessionary overnight parking in the adjoining multi-storey. There are 121 rooms from £75, with cheap weekend deals on offer. (Stakis Norfolk Gardens, Hall Ings, Bradford, 0274 734734.)

Lord Forte, Edinburgh's original model for Reo Stakis, owns the Victoria, across the street. Standard Forte fare, with 58 rooms from £60. Usual weekend breaks available. Parking, carvery restaurant, extremely convenient for city centre.

During academic vacations, Bradford University offers bargain-basement student accommodation to visitors, from £15.95. There are no frills or private bathrooms, but use of student swimming-pool and other sports facilities are included. (Bradford University, Richmond Road, Bradford, 0274 733466.)



Now redundant, wool exchange

city's southern edge, will soon be transformed into a museum of transport.

Mill owners have passed into legend as dastardly men of unquenchable greed. Not so Sir Titus Salt, who, perhaps frightened by the Chartist uprisings in 1849, built his 4,000 employees a model village, with a lavatory for each family but not a pub or pawnshop in sight. At Saltaire, on the edge of Bradford,

Salt's mighty mill, 550ft long and seven storeys high, on the banks of the Leeds and Liverpool canal, once wove 30,000 yards of cloth a day. The city's heyday is gone, but Bradford's looms still rattle away, which makes the city a wonderful place to go hunting for bargains in suit lengths, sheets, curtains and seconds of haute couture lines with imperceptible minor faults. Entire coach parties descend on the mill shops, and the city tourist office will happily provide a lengthy list of mills which sell at the back door. A local woman boasted to me of her wardrobe bulging with cashmere scarves at £13.95, which sell for £90 in Harrods.

No loom clatters at Salt's mill nowadays, but one of its huge, ground-floor, brick-vaulted weaving sheds is stuffed to bursting with a quieter delight: the largest collection outside his adopted America of the work of David Hockney, Bradford's most famous son after J.B. Priestley. Hundreds of his drawings, paintings and posters hang from the heating pipes in a gloriously informal jumble, mixed with a collection of antique furniture and Charles Rennie Mackintosh chairs, which seem to have nothing to do with anything in particular, while opera blasts from a hi-fi and an oblivious cat snoozes in an armchair. This is how an art gallery should be: it is nothing if

not welcoming and, like most of Bradford's attractions, it is free. Developed by Englishmen, the Bradford wool trade fell largely into the hands of Germans, who, after the labouring Irish, became the city's first significant immigrants in the mid-19th century. They built ever-grander wool warehouses in a quarter of the city now known as Little Germany, which boasts 55 listed buildings in barely half a square mile.

Now the immigrants are Asian, an estimated 70,000 of them, and their influence is everywhere, not least in the mosques and Hindu and Sikh temples throughout the city. But diverse cultures traditionally meet through trade, which in Bradford means either an Asian restaurant or the Bombay Stores



Souvenir: a Brontë plate destined for an admirer's wall

in Shearbridge Road for an immense array of Indian fabrics and jewellery, or Panorama Stores in Woodhead Road, which claims to be the largest Asian foodstore in Europe.

Culture of a loftier order was far from absent in the lives of the wool barons. St George's Hall (those same architects again) cannot quite claim parity with its namesake in Liverpool, but it is a perfectly adequate venue which keeps alive the northern choral tradition. A short distance across the city centre is the splendidly preserved and renovated Alhambra theatre of 1914. Ask to have a peep into its sumptuous auditorium.

Priestley, whose coat tails fly in bronze outside the photography museum, thought that his home town was "generally held to be an ugly city; and so I suppose it is, but it always seemed to me to have the kind of ugliness that could not only be tolerated, but often enjoyed." The Worstedopolis of an earlier age is still very much alive, and blessed as ever with its surroundings of high, open moorland. No local man, Priestley wrote, could be exiled from the uplands and the blue air; he always had one foot on the heather.

And if he had any sense he would not venture up there without a pair of Baird's self-warming socks inside his boots.

no taste beyond the table

The French are the undoubted experts when it comes to food, but many English find their hotel décor unpalatable

the clumsy way in which a bathroom has been gouged out of an otherwise well-proportioned room, with the ablutions screened off with a plastic concertina curtain. It is also that most French furniture is an ergonomic disgrace.

Here is an appreciation of a French hotel bedroom received last week from a regular correspondent to *The Good Hotel Guide*: "The floor slopes, the mattress takes a nightly slide down the bed. As for the furniture! Well, had *Manon des Sources* flogged off the furniture, this must be it. A wardrobe that the Lion, the Witch, those ghastly children and the family silverware could be stuffed in. The décor is pure 1950s Holiday Inn, but who cares? Pale blue upsets no one. Our balcony has more bric-a-brac per square inch than the flea market. The slippers are a lovely something

armchair of a discomfort that only the French can create, and someone's café throw-out."

My correspondent was writing, incidentally, not about a backstreet leasit, but a *soigné*, rosetted Relais et Château hotel in a village *perche*, overlooking the Riviera.

For most of us, if we don't feel positively affectionate about the idiosyncrasy of French hotel décor, the virtues of the cooking far outweigh the shortcomings of the accommodation. But there is another crucial difference about hotels on the other side of the Channel: their astonishing cheapness. I recently went on a three-day tour in the Haut Languedoc — admittedly, not one of the more expensive regions — and stayed in turn in a well-known inn in walking country which had a red R in Michelin (good food at reasonable prices), with its own pool

and elaborately equipped children's playground; a sophisticated b&b hotel in the old town of Montpellier, overlooking the cathedral; and a vintage country château set in a park. In each case, b&b was no more than £25 per person — incomparably better value for money than equivalent hotels in Britain.

There are reasons why French hotels are so inexpensive: plenty of property on the market, little or no inflation in land prices, and, until recently, lower interest rates. But perhaps the most important factor is the French tradition of hotel-keeping, passed on from one generation to another.

In Britain, most independent hotels are throttled by their formidable bank loans. In France, they inherit. And hotels which have been in a family for years also feel different from a new establishment — the differ-

ence between matured in cask and Beaujolais Nouveau.

Goodness knows, France is no terra incognita to the British, but there are many potential converts who still prefer to take their holidays at home. The opening of the Channel tunnel won't be like the pulling down of the Berlin wall. Perhaps the whole event will be an anti-climax once the Queen has cut the tape, broken a bottle over the first train and returned to the palace.

The terminal may be as soulless and frustrating as the ferry ports of Dover and Portsmouth. And yet it is possible that the hyping of the tunnel and the simultaneous promotion of Euro-Disney outside Paris could bring about a mass conversion of British chauvinists who have always affected to rubbish the Gallic pleasures. They may come to scoff. But they may stay to scoff. How will the poor British hotelier survive?

HILARY RUBINSTEIN
● Editor of *The Good Hotel Guide* (Macmillan, £13.99).

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
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Carrying on the family tradition: Ian and Susie Pasley-Tyler with daughter Imogen, aged 11, in the grounds of their home, Coton Manor in Northamptonshire

Living up to a legacy

Home from home: Ian and Susie Pasley-Tyler

Ian Pasley-Tyler has a theory about gardens, based on experience. "For three generations, the men in my family have been the horticultural navvies, while the genius has gone through the female line. My grandmother, my mother, my sister and my wife have been the ones who truly understood about plants and their nature."

As the new master of Coton Manor in Northamptonshire, Mr Pasley-Tyler and his wife Susie are settling into the house where he was brought up, anticipating their first season of visitors to the colourful ten-acre oasis that his grandmother began and his mother perfected on a hilly corner a few miles north of Northampton. It is a fitting venue for an open week run by the National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens, which starts tomorrow as a part of Garden Heritage Week.

Mr Pasley-Tyler spends his weeks in London, where he is finance controller at the Midland Bank. But at the weekends he gets

his orders from Susie, who has taken to running the house and garden like one of their rare breeds of ducks takes to water.

"I don't really enjoy London these days," Susie says. "I just make quick forays, do what I have to do, and then return happily to all this..."

What she embraces with a sweep of an arm is a 12-bedroomed house of mellow, yellow Northamptonshire stone, and below it the garden that her husband's American grandmother initiated and his late mother, Haralidine, made into one of the most interesting and attractive in the region.

The estate stretches down a hill through leafy dells and streams, past ornamental ponds where flamingoes stalk on ridiculous legs, to a beautiful beechwood, which in May is carpeted with bluebells. The path winds back uphill through the nurseries to a plant shop and tearooms.

Asked what he would have done if his wife hadn't taken to the role of gardener, Mr Pasley-Tyler says: "It would have been a sacrilege to have taken it over from my parents if that had been the case. My sister, Henrietta Pearson, would have been the logical person otherwise. But, happily for me, Susie loves Coton."

Mrs Pasley-Tyler admits that she is not a natural plantswoman like her sister-in-law, but has been "on a very steep learning curve since January 1, when we took over".

They have three children, including 18-year-old Guy, who helps with the gardening at weekends in the season. Mrs Pearson and her husband Nicholas use the upper floor of the house at weekends, and since Haralidine passed on much of her knowledge of the rare plants in the garden to her daughter, Henrietta's presence at weekends is an added resource for Susie.

Described in the 'Domesday

Book as a manor house, it was burnt down in the Civil war and after 1662 was used as a farmhouse, until 1925 when Mr Pasley-Tyler's grandparents bought it. They introduced American plumbing into five new bathrooms and installed central heating.

"The war almost brought the garden to its knees," 81-year-old Henry Pasley-Tyler, Ian's father, says. "I was in the navy, serving in Malta and in Egypt. Haralidine was working in an aircraft factory, while her mother had to adapt the garden for vegetables. We took over the house in 1950; now it's Ian's show."

On January 1 this year, Ian Pasley-Tyler and his father exchanged houses. In the adjacent village of Coton, where the family owns two cottages for their two full-time gardeners and the tea-shop manager, Mr Pasley-Tyler and Susie also occupied a weekend cottage. "So it was simply a matter

of switching beds with my father," he says.

The garden was first opened in 1968, and attracts about 10,000 visitors a year. It hasn't made anybody a fortune, but the Pasley-Tylers hope to be able to increase plant sales to a point where the operation can be self-sustaining.

The refurbishment of the house has come second to the garden, but the attractive loggia built by the grandparents will be the venue tomorrow of a discussion on conservation, attended by Fenja Gunn, author of *The Lost Gardens of Gertrude Jekyll*, and members of the National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens. Meantime, Mrs Pasley-Tyler continues her education: "I've mastered 17 pages of Latin names on our plant list. It's quite a legacy."

JOY BILLINGTON

● Coton, between Rugby and Northampton, is open Wednesdays, Saturdays and bank holidays between 2pm and 6pm to the end of September. £2.50, OAPs £2 and child 50p.

Heap of the week: Ruperra, Gwent

A noble survivor

Ruperra is a wonderfully romantic sham castle to be classed with Lulworth in Dorset. Like Lulworth, it is a shell, the victim of a fire in 1941 when Dutch troops were billeted there. Yet while Lulworth has been taken over by English Heritage, and bristles with scaffolding, no such action has been forthcoming in Wales for Ruperra.

In 1951 the last of the Morgans, who built Ruperra, moved to Monte Carlo, and in 1962 the castle was sold and now belongs to a farmer.

For a house so close to Cardiff and Newport, it stands in an isolated position. The drive, without a gatehouse, is long and rough. Suddenly, through the saplings, you glimpse a vast expanse of stable roofs, and beyond Ruperra stands with circular corner towers and battlements ringing the parapets.

The stable court is in better condition and could easily be made into cottages. Less happy is the rendered range beside the castle looking too much like a council house.

Around the castle at some distance is a castellated garden wall. Although the original arrangement of garden court has disappeared, terraces recorded in pre-war aerial photographs can still be seen. At the top is the skeleton of a splendid conservatory, extended into a grand composition by balancing wing.

Ruperra was built in 1626 by Thomas Morgan, the younger son of a junior branch of the Morgans of Tredegar House. He had married the heiress of the estate and became steward of the Earl of Pembroke and

Sheriff of Glamorgan. The main recent tragedy has been the sudden collapse of one of the corner towers. Otherwise, the shell is surprisingly unaltered, with Renaissance carving on the porch and Tudor windows.

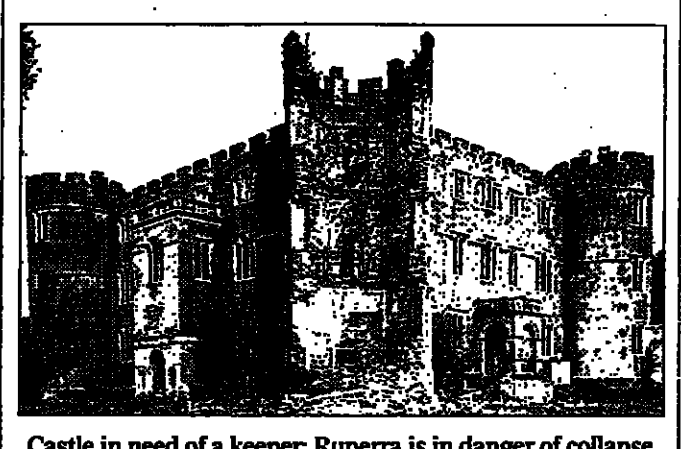
The only visible prospect of restoration at present lies in development. A company which has recently undertaken the restoration of Vann nearby is discussing a scheme for a substantial amount of new housing with the local council.

Ruperra deserves a better fate. Like Lulworth, it should be taken into public ownership, repaired and opened to the public. Wales, of course, has a profusion of medieval castles in the care of CADW (the sister body of English Heritage), but Ruperra belongs to a great age in British architecture, that of Robert Smythson, who had an imagination and originality rivaling Vanbrugh's.

Although there is no proof that Smythson was the designer of Ruperra, it is close to ground plans drawn by him. Smythson was a key figure in the romanticism of the Elizabethan and Stuart courts. Ruperra is one of the main surviving witnesses of this style.

We hear about the millennium and the heritage, but much of what is proposed is putting a gloss on buildings which cannot be considered seriously in danger. Surely a nobler aim would be to concentrate at least some effort and funds on buildings such as Ruperra which are in danger of collapse.

MARCUS BINNEY



Castle in need of a keeper: Ruperra is in danger of collapse



House of mystery: Mainards Farmhouse in Kent has underground passages and overgrown ivy

Listed labour of love

The gods of estate agency must have been in a generous mood when they introduced the Grade II-listed Mainards Farmhouse to the market. This is a house with plenty of "features", from medieval murals to an underground passage.

Until two years ago, Mainards was occupied by three elderly spinsters. Apart from the installation of a Rayburn oven and the replacement of some plaster panels with plasterboard, the house seems hardly to have been touched for 50 years. It has no heating, apart from from the open fireplaces. Much of the wiring and plasterwork is suspect. But the most extraordinary evidence of the house's decline is the ivy that curls upwards from massive trunks, weaves through the roof tiles and bursts out around the chimney stacks.

The owner bought the house believing it could be fully restored for about £50,000. Now it seems that £150,000-250,000 would be more realistic. So Mainards is once more for sale.

The building is described by the agents as "typical of a Kentish Yeoman's half house or Wealden house". Although it is near Tenterden in the Kentish part of the Weald, Mainards' layout does not conform to the Wealden shape, which was normally a double height space in the middle of the building, with some accommodation at either end and an open hearth on the floor.

Mainards is L-shaped, with a complex arrangement of interconnected rooms on its two floors. It was once a hall house, which of the rooms was the hall? The most likely answer seems to be the room that is now the kitchen and the bedroom and bathroom above.

If, as seems probable, the house was built in stages, there must have been relatively short intervals in between, for the style is consistent. The oak timber frame is every-

HOUSE HUNTER

Mainards Farmhouse
Tenterden

where, culminating in the roof void, in the "crown post" support that is another characteristic of Wealden houses. The decoration is sparse, but includes a carved timber fireplace lintel in the biggest bedroom bearing the date 1590.

In another of the five bedrooms is a mural. From the three small corners that have been revealed, it appears to follow a repetitive pattern and to cover at least two walls.

The leafy motif is not unlike a wallpaper design, and by the 19th century, such patterns were being adapted for wallpapers.

The house is full of enigmas and mystery. What lies beneath the rest of the plaster in the mural room? And is the rumour of an underground passage, once said to lead to a nearby priory, just the estate agent's wishful thinking?

Investigating these questions would be part of the pleasure of owning Mainards Farmhouse. But at £250,000, with perhaps as much again for its restoration, the pleasure will not be cheaply bought.

CALLUM MURRAY
● Details: call Jackson-Stops & Staff's Majfair office on 071-499 6291.

Des res if a little derelict

Buyers' France

TARN ET GARONNE

locally born artist Ingres is dotted with attractive medieval hill towns and some extremely pretty Romanesque churches.

A prolific fruit-growing area, crisscrossed by rivers and full of lakes, it is famous for its preserves and sweet dishes based on the produce of the area, including succulent peaches, plums, grapes and apricots.

Easily accessible by the A62 motorway to Montauban (about nine hours' drive from Calais), or by plane to Toulouse, it is worth considering for those who find

Dreams made to measure

Most of us live in hand-me-down houses, which we have bought fully equipped with someone else's taste, and then spend years trying to turn into something made-to-measure for our own lifestyles.

Last year, of 135,000 private homes built in this country, only 3,000 were put up by individuals, rather than developers.

However, Richard McCormack, the president of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), says that, for the individual, "there has never been a better time to build".

Low land prices and an increasing boredom with the standard styles churned out by big developers and builders has created a window of opportunity that, he says, should not be lost.

There are some magnificent sites available. The one that takes the cake is probably the four-acre Villa Shireen plot, skirting the Thames near Windsor, with views across the water to the castle and Eton College chapel. But John Pryor, of Strutt & Parker, the agents for the site, says there has been little interest from English buyers. "It's very un-English to build from scratch," he says. "Most interest in Villa Shireen has been from foreigners and speculators. Individually, the British seem to be bad at visualising a house that isn't there."

The asking price for the Windsor plot is £2 million — and it will cost several million more to build the ten-bedroom house this royal cabbage patch is waiting for.

More modest plots can be found all over Britain. The key to cost is pound for pound related to house

Building your own home has advantages — but beware of the hidden pitfalls



Perfect plot: Sarah and Mark Blacksell at their Dartmoor home

prices around the country. In Scotland you could pay less than £5,000 for a substantial and attractive site, but in the south prices can rocket. For example, nine prime-position one-fifth-of-an-acre plots in Guildford, Surrey, were recently sold for between £120,000 and £140,000 each. Savills is offering a 146-acre farm in the Bride Valley near Dorchester, with planning permission for a six-bedroom farmhouse, for £305,000, and Knight, Frank & Rutley is selling a 3.5-acre site adjoining Wentworth golf course, with planning consent for a 10,450 sq ft mansion, for £1.35 million.

A lot of sites are advertised and sold at auction, which is how Mark

Blacksell, a geography lecturer, and his wife, Sarah, found their perfect plot four years ago. It is a corner site bordered by four great trees at the edge of the village of Bellstone, set in the heart of their much-loved Dartmoor but within easy commuting distance of Exeter university, where they both work.

They have never regretted the decision. They found their architect, Anthony Harrison of the Harrison Sutton Partnership in Tames, through a friend.

"The villagers were worried about an intrusive modern box being built on the plot — we've all seen that happen — but we wanted to build something that wouldn't conflict with the houses around it,"

Mrs Blacksell says. Their house is built of grey brick topped with old slate tiles in a square U-shape set into the hillside.

The Blacksell's site was bought with planning permission — which is essential today, warns Michael Wilcox, of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. "It is extraordinary how many people buy a field with a pleasant view, believing they will be allowed to build on it."

Neither is it true that buying a plot with a barn, or old ruin, will ensure planning permission.

You also need to be realistic, when buying, about the cost of making mains services to your property. "It is one reason why you should appoint your architect first," says Leslie Fairweather, of RIBA's Clients Advisory Service.

"He will probably be able to find you a good site and advise you on how difficult it is going to be to build." The level of difficulty will relate to cost.

Appointing the right architect or surveyor can lift all the headaches of the development off your shoulders. "But it is amazing how many people try to cut costs by sketching out their own ideas and bringing in a builder," Mr Fairweather says.

As well as helping you find the plot, design your home and steer the plans through the local council, an architect will help you find reliable local builders and contractors and will usually oversee the entire building process.

For this service a chartered surveyor or architect will cost you up to 10 per cent of total building costs. The traditional fees are 7.5 per cent for a surveyor and 8 per cent for an architect.

The difference between an architect and a surveyor is in the design. If you want an uncomplicated house and have a clear idea of what you want, a surveyor will probably be able to fulfil your needs. But if you want an inspiring design then you must employ an architect.

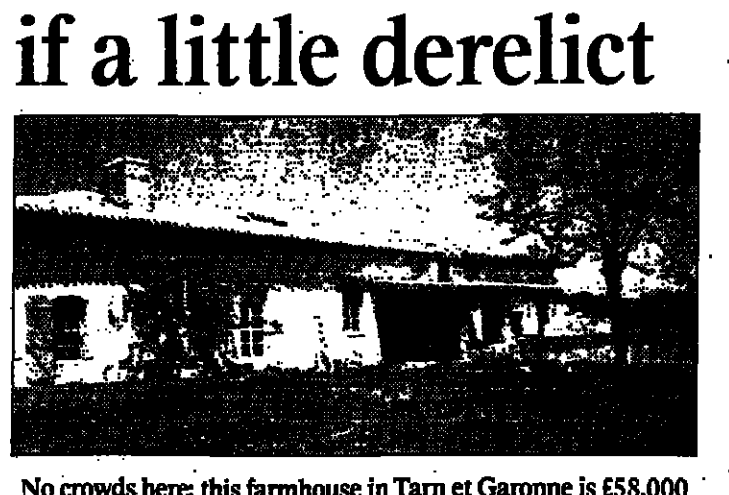
Another alternative is to approach a company such as Package Build Management, which has a file of between 600 and 700 building plots in the South East with outline planning permission.

It charges a set fee per project, depending on the size and complexity of the job, and suggests an estimate of £50 a square foot on a house of 1,800sq ft upwards (1,800sq ft being the size of a good four-bedroom house).

ANNE MORRIS

● Contacts: Riba (071-580 5533); RICS (071-222 7000); Strutt & Parker (071-629 7382); Savills (0722 320422); Knight Frank & Rutley (071-629 8171); Package Build Management (081-783 1991); the Harrison Sutton Partnership, Tames (0803 865084).

CHERYL TAYLOR



No crowds here: this farmhouse in Tarn et Garonne is £58,000

areas such as the Dordogne too crowded with the British for comfort. Prices are reasonably low, and there is a good range of property, from cottages and farm buildings to large country houses and old converted water-mills.

In the north of the region the houses are white, built of traditional *querry blanc* stone, with shallow

roofs of rounded tiles. Further south the colour of the stone changes to pale pink or even red, according to the shade of the local sand. The most sought-after dwellings feature distinctive square pigeon towers and porticoed wooden balconies adorned in climbing vines.

In the countryside north of

Montauban, a small, run-down *ferme* (farm-cottage), with an old baker's oven and a large barn, can still be found for about £15,000. But you will need to spend at least £30,000 to buy a home with mains water and electricity that is instantly habitable.

It is possible to pick up a sizable property and good acreage for your money. Large stone farmhouses for conversion, with outbuildings and enough land to keep a few horses, start at about £30,000. Converted and restored, these fetch from £50,000 to £100,000.

A substantial stone farmhouse close to the pretty riverside town of Antonin Noble Val, set in 60 acres of land but in need of renovation, is currently for sale at £44,000. The agent is Barbers, 427 North End Road, Fulham, SW6 (071-381 0112).

Local agent Madeleine Vallet, based in Najac in the Tarn et Garonne (010 33 65 29 74 74) also handles a good selection of property for sale in the region.

Play school for grown-ups

Joanna Gibbon
visits the college
where adults and
children learn
together

Every Thursday morning during term time, an excited group of under-fives and their parents, nannies or minders troop off to school to learn art, dance and acting — together.

Before the class arrives, Amanda Hayes, head of the art, craft and design faculty, and Karen Elliott, a tutor in dance who organised the innovative Arts Family Workshop course, snip and stick together sheets of white paper. Pots of glue are on stand-by. Suddenly, 18 toddlers arrive, smiling and shouting hello, wriggling out of their coats and running to the tables, with nine adults in tow.

Today's theme at London's Wornington Centre, part of the Kensington and Chelsea College for Adult Education, is the Magic Toy Shop. The toddlers stick small pieces of coloured paper on to the outline of a child drawn on large sheets of paper; the idea is to make either a Raggedy Ann doll with wild yellow paper hair, or a robot with white squares of paper.

Described as giving adults and children a chance to enjoy learning together, with activities such as dance, art and music, the workshop is unusual in that the adults are expected to participate fully. There is no sitting on the sidelines; everyone cuts paper, paints, sings, skips, hops and rolls on the floor.

The organisers say that this is not a children's playgroup. "It is parent education, where the adults find out about themselves and their children and their relationships," explains Ms Hayes, who is worried that adult education, which is under threat of government cuts, is too often trivialised.

As a result of attending the workshop, she says, some parents have taken Pre-School Playgroup and Childcare courses at the college.

Anna Byers, who, as head of performing arts and physical education, helped to create the class four years ago, says: "With children, thinking of the next thing to do can be exhausting. The group organises this and disciplines the child so that the parents can enjoy



Getting down to learning: if the dance lesson calls for rolling about on the floor, then down go the grown-ups alongside the children

being with their children. It is fun and the pressure is off."

Ms Byers says that many parents, who do not allow their children to use glue or paint at home, appreciate the chance to do this in the group. "Sometimes it is a lack of space at home, but children do need to let rip and make a mess."

Joining in the dance and music, the second half of the workshop, can prove more difficult. While rolling about pretending to be a stick man is fine in your own sitting room, it is quite different doing it in front of others. "Some adults feel vulnerable when asked to take their shoes off, and some — not many — have left because they felt they could not cope," Ms Byers says.

Adults in their early twenties are most likely to be embarrassed. "They see it as making fools of themselves, whereas older people

are more secure," Ms Hayes says.

All three tutors recognise they cannot bully anyone, but they have ways of persuading the recalcitrant. "If it is a small group at the beginning of term and everyone is feeling shy, then by quietly suggesting shoes are dangerous — fingers can be trodden upon, which is why we remove them — it can be OK," Ms Byers says.

The children are too young to be concerned: released into the large hall, they run around, oblivious to everything. At Ms Elliott's suggestion, soon everyone joins hands or stretches their arms and legs as the music changes.

Ms MacNeil, the only adult male in the room and child-minder to Luke, aged two, and Katie, four, is here for the first time. Mr MacNeil, a theatre designer, says: "It is good for Luke and Katie to be with other

kids; me joining in is a sensible idea because I am like a bridge — they know me but they don't know the other adults here."

Maria Swayne, who has been dancing while carrying her daughter Judith, is now sitting out because her son Albert, aged two-and-a-half, accidentally collided with another toy and bashed his cheek. All three have been attending the workshop since last September. She feels that the children benefit from the parents' involvement. "It builds the child's confidence and I have learnt more about Berne, how he reacts to things and what he is capable of."

Mrs Swayne says that the parents are also a teaching tool. "A lot of the children are too young to understand about following Karen so they look at their parents; you can take the lead and they feel confi-

dent to follow." A Lloyds broker for 12 years before having children, Mrs Swayne does not feel embarrassed about joining in. "I don't mind making a fool of myself, but some other mothers do," she says.

Kiki Aryeeyee and Natalie, aged two-and-a-half, joined last term. Mrs Aryeeyee does not mind the dancing and says she would feel more embarrassed if she sat at the side doing nothing.

It is open to conjecture whether everyone who attends the one-and-a-half-hour group shares the same aims as its creators, but judging by the delighted squeals, the enthusiastic clapping and the smiles, all leave well contented.

For further information, contact the Wornington Centre, Kensington and Chelsea College, Wornington Road, London W10 0P7. Tel: 071 551 7121. The new term starts on April 30.

Holiday events

LONDON

□ **Mozzart magic** Modelers from all over the country show working models of trains, planes, steam engines and fairground organs, plus the museum's own steam engines. **Kew Bridge Steam Museum, Green Dragon Lane, Brentford. Today, tomorrow 11am-5pm. £2.50, child £1.40, family £7.25.**

□ **Piazza Jugglethon** Learn to juggle, with lessons throughout the day in return for donations to the St Peter's Research Trust. Celebrities try their hands from 10.30am to noon. **Covent Garden Piazza, WC2. Today 10am-late afternoon. Free.**

□ **Blackholes** and Uncle Albert Russell Stannard, physics professor at the Open University, introduces children to Einstein's theory of relativity in the lively, comprehensible Easter lecture. Suitable for children aged 11 and over. **Lecture Theatre, Science Museum, Exhibition Road, SW7. Today 2pm. Tickets from the information desk (check availability on 071-938 0800). Museum admission £3.75, child £1.90.**

□ **Meet the dinosaurs** A new, permanent exhibition introduces prehistoric beasts and dinosaurs, dispels old myths and provides an exciting, hands-on discovery outing for children of all ages. **Rosson Gallery, Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, NW7. Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm, Sun, 11am-6pm. £4, Child 50p-15p, under-fives free. Family £10.50.**

□ **Spitalfields sports** The creators of Camden Lock bring new life to the old fruit and vegetable market. At tomorrow's opening, visitors can try roller-blading (free skate hire), golf, laser clay pigeon shooting and other sporting activities. **Spitalfields, opposite Bishopsgate and Liverpool Street Station tomorrow.**

□ **Angelic marionettes** Afternoons, the Little Angel Company's Noah, a medieval comedy about the deluge, for the young and over. **Mornings the Jacqui Puppet Theatre present Dogworthy's Magic Showtime for three to seven-year-olds.**

Little Angel Marionette Theatre, Dogworthy's Magic Showtime, N1 071-226 1787. Noah, today, tomorrow 3pm, £5, child £4. Dogworthy, today, tomorrow, 11am, £4, child £3.50.

□ **Brass pictures** If you make a rubbing of one of the collection's 90 medieval and Tudor brasses, you can make one of an animal free of charge. **London Brass Rubbing Centre, St Martin-in-the-Fields, WC2 071-437 6023. Until April 30. Today and Mon-Thurs, 10am-6pm. Tomorrow noon-6pm. Free. Brass rubbings 95p-£10.50.**

□ **Brighton basketball** The Harlem Globetrotters versus American champions The Boston Shamrocks. **Brighton Centre, Kings Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 202. Today, 8pm. £12.50-20.20.**

8811. Today, 7.30pm. £3.50-£10.50. Under-12s £7.50-£9.50.

□ **Belting high-jinks** Punch and Judy, clowns, bouncy castle and buggies for children, plus the permanent animal village with birds of prey and shire horses. **Whitbread Hop Farm, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 2JH. 8.20-9.00pm. Tomorrow 10am-6pm. Last admission 5pm. £4.25, child £3.**

□ **Durham discoveries** "Geology for Beginners" — a walk along Seaham Beach with geologist Maurice Holliday. Suitable for older children. **Meet at the car park, opposite Seaham Hall (grid reference 422508), Seaham, near Durham. Tomorrow by 2.30pm. £1, child 50p.**



Spring fever: bouncy castles are fun for young tumblers

□ **Taplow horses** Qualifying classes for the International Horse Show, plus jumping classes, a dog agility display and shire horses drawing harrows. **Taplow, Bucks. Tomorrow from 10am. £4, child £2.**

□ **Bard's birthday** Shakespeare's 428th birthday celebrations begin with a procession around the town. Entertainment throughout the day includes costumes, characters, musicians, dancers and displays. **Strafford-on-Avon. Today, from 11am. Details from the Shakespeare Trust (0789 204010).**

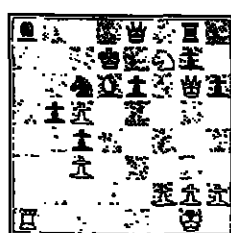
□ **Liverpool** To coincide with the exhibition "Rhinocons: The Horn of a Dilemma", which focuses on the plight of this endangered species, there is a talk (today noon-1.30pm) about rhino conservation by a keeper from Chester Zoo. Also today, and on Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, children can visit the Rhino Activity Area, where the artist Danny Callaghan will give out printed postcards and art materials for children to create messages of support. **Liverpool Museum, Merseyside (051 2070001).**

JUDY FROSHAUGH

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

This year has been officially designated "Alphine Year" in celebration of the great world champion who was born 100 years ago. This week we shall continue to feature positions from his games. Today's position is from the game Alphonse — Bogolyubov, Wiesbaden, 1929. Alphine, white to play, here concluded the game with a typical combination. Can you see what he played?



Send your answer on a postcard with your name and address to: The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 3NN. The first three correct answers drawn on Thursday next will win a Batford chess book.

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 2774



ACROSS
3 Blunder (4)
10 Rovers (4)
11 Spanish friend (5)
12 Relatives (3)
13 Tennis 40-40 (5)
14 Muddled (7)
15 Join (6)
16 Run "spaced" (5)
17 Pocket watch chain (5)
18 Marmite (5)
19 Prize fragment (4,5)
20 Cive off (5)
21 Submerge (4)
22 Prison room (4)

SOLUTIONS TO NO 2773

ACROSS: 1 Squirm 5 Sprint 8 Ape 9 Velour 10 Cope 11 Gnu 12 Illusion 14 Shandy 15 De-luxe 16 Sprayer 18 Gory 19 A will 21 Baffle 22 All 23 Huffy 24 Engage
DOWN: 2 Quaver the pitch 3 Iron nerve 4 Mar-ned 5 Squid 6 Roc 7 Tape recording 13 Soft going 15 Durable 17 Delay 20 IAF

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Thanks to Mrs Richardson's generous legacy of £20,000 we were able to equip a Mercy Clinic with a new X-ray machine. The RNLI is grateful for your contribution. If you would like to help, please contact: Mrs Joan Richardson, 111, Upper Lane, St Albans, Herts AL1 1JH. Tel: 0452 671133.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Help find a cure

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